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CONTENTS

THE SHAPE OF THINGS 49

EDITORIALS:

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE 51
JUSTICE FRANKFURTER 52
SABOTAGE IN CHINA 53

QUESTIONS ON THE WHITNEY CASE by I. F. Stone 55

LIVING PHILOSOPHIES. VIII. WHY I AM A MARXIST by Harold J. Laski 59

DEMOCRACY WINS IN CHILE by Freda Kirchwey 62

THE PRESS AND THE NLRB by Mary Bartlett 64

IN THE WIND 66

ISSUES AND MEN by Oswald Garrison Villard 67

BOOKS AND THE ARTS:

A LAST CONVERSATION WITH KAREL CAPEK by Erika Mann 68
NOTES BY THE WAY by Margaret Marshall 69
A GUIDE TO SOCIAL THOUGHT by Max Lerner 70
A MIXED BAG by Norah Hoult 71
ANSWER TO "MEIN KAMPF" by Paul Klapper 71
ITALY IN COLORADO by Eda Lou Walton 72
THE NEW PALESTINE by Philip S. Bernstein 72
DRAMA: MORE MATTER AND LESS ART by Joseph Wood Krutch 73
RECORDS by B. H. Haggin 74

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The Shape of Things

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THE QUESTIONS RAISED BY I. F. STONE IN AN article in this issue on the challenge of the Whitney case merit the attention of Congress. The failure of the Attorney General of New York and the nationally famous "racket-busting" District Attorney of Manhattan, Mr. Dewey, to go as deeply into this case as they might cannot be corrected by Congress. But the readiness of Chairman Douglas of the SEC to declare the Whitney case closed even after the resignation of Dr. Hutchins as a public representative on the Board of Governors of the Exchange warrants inquiry at Washington. Is the SEC so anxious to fraternize with President "Bill" Martin of the Exchange that it is willing to shut its eyes to facts which disturb the carefully built-up picture of a "reformed" Stock Exchange? Are the results of past New Deal investigations to evaporate in the warm but treacherous atmosphere of an era of good feeling between the Exchange and the SEC? Is our most important market, the market in which the value of the savings of the American people is in large part established, to be left in the hands of a sham "reform" administration? The unwillingness of the Exchange to inquire into the circumstances that enabled an embezzler to serve so long as its officer is apparent. Chairman Douglas's statement to Arthur Krock, "For the SEC, as for the Exchange, the Whitney case is closed," will be comforting at Broad and Wall streets but it should raise the alarm on Capitol Hill.

✶

NOT SINCE DREYFUS HAS JUSTICE WON SO great a victory as in the freeing of Tom Mooney. The power of California's great capitalist interests sent him to jail and kept him there twenty-two years despite the fact that three official investigations indicated a frame-up. The power of organized labor and of its progressive middle-class allies has set Mooney free by the election of a governor pledged to pardon him. Culbert I. Olson, the new Governor of California, has covered his name with glory by his historic act. The Russian Revolution saved Mooney from execution—the cry of "Muni" set up by demonstrators before our embassy in what was then St. Peters-

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burg led to the first investigation of the case and the commutation of Mooney's sentence to life imprisonment by Governor Stephens at the request of President Wilson. The upsurge of the forces that gave this country the New Deal has finally made it possible to set Mooney free, after repeated appeals to the Supreme Court proved unavailing. We salute Tom Mooney the symbol and the man.

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UNLIKE THE EXTRAVAGANT ACCUSATIONS which preceded it, the Sheppard committee's report on "unjustifiable political activity" in the last campaign is a temperate document. It not only testifies to certain abuses; it disproves a great many reckless charges. In characteristic fashion the press has devoted headlines to the three states where such political activity in connection with the administration of relief was revealed, soft-pedaling the equally impressive disclosure that similar charges proved groundless in six other states. Despite the moderation of the committee's report, the habitual foes of a generous relief program have already converted it into a manifesto against the WPA. In citing this disparity between the report itself and the sweeping charges heard last fall, we do not propose to condone or dismiss whatever corruption has been disclosed. We do protest against the hypocritical use of these unspectacular findings by those whose main objective is to curtail relief. An aim that is politically so perilous must be camouflaged in noble phrases. Hence the proposal to return control of relief to the states, as if this would wipe out politics in relief and substitute efficiency. Walter Lippmann's extraordinary suggestion that all WPA recipients as well as public office-holders be disfranchised is more candid. In many quarters the outcry against "politics in relief" screens the desire to eliminate relief as a political issue—and thereby pave the way for elimination of a decent relief program.

✶

MARTIN DIES HAS HAD HIS FLING WITH $25,000 of the public money. He has basked in newspaper publicity for several months and has hung up an all-time record for half-truths irresponsibly arrived at. Even the New York *Times* admits that the committee to which it gave such lavish space in its news columns has "made silly and vehement charges" and that its personnel should be altered if it is to accomplish any serious results. Unfortunately, however, Representative Dies has become the darling of bodies like the New York State Chamber of Commerce, and the committee, by playing on the fears of the public, has built up for itself a popular support which many politicians in Congress who privately have no respect for it dare not ignore. On the other hand, the La Follette committee, which has done such vital and careful work in investigating the denial of civil liberties, has no such prestige and is in danger of having its work cut short. Now that Congress has reassembled for one of the most momentous sessions in its history, the Dies committee should be given its walking papers. It should first be required, however, to give a financial accounting. Paul Y. Anderson charged, with supporting evidence, that the committee could not have carried on as long as it did on $25,000. The Dies committee has richly earned a thorough investigation.

✶

NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN, THAT PILGRIM OF "appeasement," has gone to Rome with his self-imposed Munich halo showing signs of wear. His growing army of avowed opponents at home has warned him not to buy any more worthless promises with other people's cash; his parliamentary followers, still outwardly faithful, are reported to be shaking in their shoes for fear the Duce will bully him into some undertaking that will set the smoldering electorate ablaze with resentment. His friends in the French government are clearly nervous about the lengths to which his simple faith in dictatorial hearts may lead him, and we imagine there was some plain speaking over the teacups in Paris. To Daladier the extravagance of the Roman demands has been a godsend. He is enough of a French nationalist to know that Corsica is not Czechoslovakia. Mussolini left him no alternative but an emphatic negative, and he has returned from his tour of Tunis to find his domestic position much strengthened. We hope he has been able to impart some of this belated firmness to his British colleague. Obviously he had to forbid any idea of British mediation of Italian claims on France. We trust he was also willing and able to convince Mr. Chamberlain of the danger of making further concessions to Franco.

✶

FRANCO'S HOPE FOR A DECISIVE VICTORY AS a prelude to Chamberlain's visit to Rome has been dashed by General Miaja's brilliant drive in Estremadura. As we go to press both the rebels' offensive against Catalonia and the government's attack in the south are making considerable headway. Artesa and Borjas Blancas have fallen to Franco, but the Loyalists have recovered Valsequillo, Granja de Torre, and Fuenteovejuna. It is difficult to estimate the relative value of the two offensives. The total rebel gains have been somewhat larger than the government's, but the Loyalists have moved more rapidly since their drive opened. Both areas are strategically important, but of the two the Estremadura mining region possesses by far the greatest permanent value. Franco has the advantage of position. With Republican Spain divided into two parts, his strategy is obviously to throw his full force against the two sectors alternately with a view to crushing them one at a time. Offsetting this advantage is the fact that Miaja's drive, if successful, will divide the rebel area into sectors. The coming week is likely to show which drive is the more significant. If the

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rebel offensive pushes on to a point where either Tarragona or Barcelona is endangered, the Loyalist position will be desperate indeed. But if, as is more likely, both drives are checked, the government will carry off the honors because of the greater value of its gains.

*

BARON HIRANUMA, NEW PREMIER OF JAPAN, enjoys the unenviable distinction of being the leading jingo in a nation of fire-eaters. His selection as head of the government marks the elimination of the last vestige of moderate or civilian influence in the government. Some commentators are referring to the new Cabinet as "weak" because two leading reactionaries have been dropped—Seihin Ikeda as Finance Minister and Admiral Suyetsugu as Home Minister. Weak it is in the sense that it lacks outstanding personalities, but this very fact makes it more than ever the tool of the military extremists. Except for the Premier, the new Cabinet contains only two strong figures—Baron Araki, who at one time was the recognized leader of the military clique, and Hachiro Arita, author of the Tokyo-Berlin anti-Communist pact. It is impossible to conceive that such a Cabinet will moderate the policy of conquering China or make concessions on the Open Door to conciliate the West. There is a possibility, however, that having taken all the rope, the extremists may hang themselves.

*

BISHOP MICHAEL J. CURLEY, IN REFUSING AN invitation to visit Loyalist Spain and see for himself whether the Catholic church is persecuted there, reminds us of the child who refused to eat spinach because, he said, "I might like it, and I hate the damn stuff." The fact is that the Catholic hierarchy, in Spain and out of it, is so intent on discrediting the Loyalist government that it has deliberately worked to keep churches closed in order to provide a basis for its pro-fascist propaganda. Bishop Curley's excuse that he would be murdered if he went to Barcelona is, unless he was thinking of Franco's bombs, merely a crude extension of the same technique. The Catholic hierarchy has a vested interest in the rebel cause—and it is not religious. In this country it has launched a new campaign, which has the merit of being open, for the retention of the embargo against Loyalist Spain. The President's speech is bound to intensify this campaign—which puts him under an added obligation to turn his words into action and lift the embargo immediately.

*

MONTAGU NORMAN, ALWAYS THE MYSTERY man, ended his visit to Berlin without any news leak about his conversations there. Officially the only reason for his trip was to act as godfather to Dr. Schacht's grandchild, but we suspect he was also pressed to assume spiritual paternity for the Nazi plan to sell the Jews for foreign exchange. Dr. Schacht had attempted to put over this scheme when in London recently but had met a singularly cool reception. The need for boosting Germany's purchasing power abroad, however, grows ever more urgent, as is illustrated by the coffee famine which has developed at home. Hence Dr. Schacht's hope that in the more congenial air of Berlin he could perhaps enlist the influential support of his old friend. Mr. Norman doubtless proved a ready listener, but fortunately the decision does not rest entirely with him. Even if he could induce the British government to accept the plan, American assent would still be necessary. In the light of the President's recent speech, with its suggestions of economic sanctions against fascism, we hope and believe that assent will never be given. The proper reply to the Nazi attempt to levy ransom is to intensify the boycott. The effectiveness of this weapon extends beyond the German border. Poland, Hungary, Rumania, and Czechoslovakia are all tentatively considering plans for the expulsion and spoliation of their Jewish populations. The power of the boycott acts as a check; the success of the Nazi blackmail effort would be a powerful encouragement. In this connection we welcome the organization, under the leadership of William Jay Schieffelin, of the Volunteer Christian Committee to Boycott Nazi Germany. It should prove a strong reinforcement to a growing movement.

The President's Message

THE President's opening message to Congress rang out like a bugle across the world to rally the dispirited and retreating democracies to a stand. Both its manner and its matter place it among the great state papers of our history. Glowingly eloquent, it was a long way from mere rhetoric. Its essential appeal was to the intelligence, and as such it formed a striking contrast to the frenzied demagogy of the dictators.

In the Western democracies the message should strengthen the hands of those who are working desperately to inject a little adrenalin into government policies. It will be harder after this for Mr. Chamberlain to convince his followers that the fascist wolves can be appeased by a judicious sacrifice of other people's babies.

To Americans the message was a call to recognize the crucial nature of the fascist challenge and to accept it firmly and coolly. We are asked to recognize that it is no longer a matter of altruistic and academic concern for the liberties of Europe. "We no more than other nations can afford to be surrounded by the enemies of our faith and our humanity . . . cannot forever let pass, without effective protest, acts of aggression against sister nations —acts which automatically undermine all of us."

To suggest that the President, in urging definite American resistance to aggression, was whipping up a jingo

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spirit is grossly unjust. As he pointed out, there are effective economic weapons at our disposal for countering the bullying tactics of the dictators. "At the very least," he said, "we can and should avoid any action, or any lack of action, which will encourage, assist, or build up an aggressor." If words mean anything this sentence stands as the strongest possible condemnation of our policy with regard to Spain. By refusing supplies of arms to a legitimate government, engaged in combating rebellion instigated and aided from abroad, we have bestowed a blessing on aggression. What is more, we have connived at the sapping of our own defenses. If fascism wins in Spain it will be in a position to control the Spanish and Portuguese Atlantic islands—a development which so sober an authority as Major George Fielding Eliot declares would be of "grave concern" to us. At the same time it will be strategically placed to redouble that propaganda in Latin America which is already cause for alarm. The President has rightly said: Words are not enough. He has the power in his hands to make his words effective by raising the Spanish embargo. Hesitation will reduce a magnificent speech to mere wind. We look to him to act and act now.

THE HOME FRONT

If we are to defend democracy from foreign encroachments we must provide it with an unshakable foundation at home. Despite reactionary sneers, there is good justification for the President's claim that the New Deal has made a genuine contribution toward that end. But there is still much to be done before our boasted equality of opportunity is given reality and before "the right to work" is rescued from its misuse as an anti-union slogan. We regret that Mr. Roosevelt should have proclaimed in effect a moratorium on reform.

On the central question of the budget his attitude is firmer. Despite the barrage directed at him by the advocates of economy, he has taken the stand that any move toward balancing the budget would be fatal to recovery. We think he is entirely right. It is not merely the unemployed who are at stake: it is even more a question of holding on to the measure of business revival achieved in the past few months and using it as a springboard to real recovery. We are told, of course, that a balanced budget would buoy up capitalist confidence. That is the theory; in practice it would certainly prove a stunning blow. For its immediate result would be to undermine purchasing power, and it has never been a capitalist habit to make new investments in the face of obviously declining demand. Are the President's critics prepared to see us go down a third time as a preliminary to our rescue by orthodox methods? Is it not better sense to pursue the present policy than to drop it just as it is showing signs of developing sufficient pressure to bring forth new industrial investment on a large scale?

We shall be surprised if many of the Congressional rooters for economy dare give a negative answer to this question by accepting the President's challenge and making important alterations in the budget. When the message placed the responsibility squarely on their shoulders the enthusiasm which had greeted previous references to economy evaporated rapidly. Republicans elected by Townsend votes were chilled at the notion of cutting pensions; those who had capitalized farm discontent shrank from the idea of saving on agriculture. The truth is that few Congressmen have the courage of their economy convictions. The economy campaign has all the earmarks of a political stunt, but the perfectly legitimate tactics of the President are likely to make it recoil on its authors.

An early test will come on the deficiency appropriation designed to carry the WPA to the end of the financial year. The President is asking for $875,000,000, a figure denounced in some quarters as grossly extravagant. Actually it is very doubtful whether this is sufficient. It means that the WPA enrolment, which was 3,112,000 in December, must not average more than 2,868,000 over the remainder of the fiscal year. This is a very considerable reduction, and unless reemployment by private industry proceeds more rapidly than in recent months, it may mean the transfer of thousands to relief. Yet some reactionary Congressmen are talking of $500,000,000 as a sufficient amount. This is a scandalous proposal, and we hope it will be promptly squelched.

Justice Frankfurter

THE good that Presidents do is often interred with their Administrations. It is their choice of Supreme Court justices that lives after them. The noisy battles of Roosevelt I still echo in the phrases he added to the language, but nothing else he did has had so much effect on our national development as the appointment of Justice Holmes. Wilson's Clayton Act and his Federal Trade Commission, of which so much was expected, stand as monuments to futility. But the Calvinistic stubbornness and righteous belligerency that crammed the nomination of Justice Brandeis down the throat of an unwilling Senate have continued to bear fruit in our constitutional law. We believe that in the perspective of history the appointment of Felix Frankfurter to the Supreme Court will not seem the least of Franklin Roosevelt's accomplishments.

Prophecy in this field is hazardous. Our justices, like monarchs, are unpredictable quantities, and our constitutional history is full of surprises. Marshall did not prove as incompatible with Jeffersonianism in power as Adams expected. Taney went to the bench as a champion

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of the new democratic ferment under Jackson and died as the hated spokesman of the slaveholders. Lincoln's Field lived to be the most effective and ingenious reactionary ever to sit on the court. Great scholars, like Story and Gray, have proved sterile on that bench; lawyers of little reputation, like Waite and Miller, creative. Wilson's trust-busting Attorney General, McReynolds, turned out to be a pillar of reaction; Coolidge's Attorney General, Stone, has developed a liberalism and a capacity for trenchant expression no one dreamed he possessed. Chief Justice Hughes, fresh from success as a Wall Street corporation lawyer, saved Herndon, de Jonge, and the Scottsboro boys. But other justices—Holmes, Brandeis, Cardozo—were known quantities before their nominations and fulfilled all that was expected of them. It is in this last category that we feel safe in placing Justice Frankfurter.

Frankfurter's whole life has been a preparation for the Supreme Court, and his appointment has an aesthetically satisfying inevitability. No other appointee in our history has gone to the court so fully prepared for its great tasks. His experience in government, from his first service as an Assistant United States Attorney in New York under Henry L. Stimson through his work in the War Labor Administration under Wilson, has been a wide one. His authoritative work, "The Business of the Supreme Court," written in collaboration with James M. Landis, and the annual surveys of each session that he has contributed to the *Harvard Law Review* reveal an unequaled knowledge of the court's history, cases, and procedure. He is our foremost authority on administrative law, the law that has developed around our new regulatory agencies. He first assisted and then succeeded Brandeis as leader of the forces for minimum-wage legislation in this country. From the time he was instrumental in saving Mooney from execution to his defense of Sacco and Vanzetti, Frankfurter has shown his devotion to justice and his courage. Finally the respect and friendship he has won among people of many diverse and clashing social points of view are not an accident but the reflection of qualities essential in successful democratic government, the fruit of opinions pursued with moderation, of causes championed without fanaticism, and of controversies carried on without vindictiveness. If any man can help to lessen the asperities inevitable in an age of transition such as ours, if any one man can help to prevent a new irreconcilable conflict, that man is Frankfurter. There will be no Dred Scott decisions from a Supreme Court on which he sits.

Mr. Roosevelt gave the court new vitality with the appointment of Black; he gives it new and rich talents for conciliation, adjustment, and statesmanship in Frankfurter. We congratulate the President on having made the right and unmistakable choice to fill the seat held by Cardozo and before him by Holmes.

Sabotage in China

FOR some months reports have been current regarding the existence of an opportunist faction within the Chinese government which has deliberately sabotaged Chiang Kai-shek's efforts to weld a united nation to resist Japanese invasion. The action of Wang Ching-wei, right-wing leader and former Premier, in urging the acceptance of Japan's peace terms fully confirmed these reports. The full story of the sabotage by elements opposed to Chiang Kai-shek has not, however, been told. The following communication from Donald M. Davies, China-born Associated Press correspondent at Chungking, adds a hitherto undisclosed and disheartening chapter. We have every reason to believe that it is a true story. In interpreting it the reader must remember that it refers specifically to conditions in Szechuan, the most populous of the provinces remaining in Chinese hands. These conditions contrast very markedly with those existing around Shanghai or Hankow, where Chiang Kai-shek was long personally in control. They also contrast with those in Kwangsi, where Li Tsung-jen and Pai Chung-hsi have for years steeled the population for resistance to Japan, and in the Northwest, where the Eighth Route Army has organized the population for mass resistance. Even Shantung, where Han Fu-chu was executed for treason, has contributed its share to mass defense.

For the first nine or ten months of the war Szechuan was isolated and relatively unaffected by the conflict. Then when Hankow was first endangered last spring, the civil capital was moved to Chungking, while Chiang, with some of the more active branches of the government, remained at Hankow. During the long period before Hankow actually fell, there were many occasions on which Wang Ching-wei and his followers in Chungking appeared to be sabotaging Chinese resistance. They opposed closer cooperation with the Soviet Union, prevented the arming of the masses, and, as the following communication so clearly shows, failed to take the most elementary steps for arousing the population to China's peril. Mr. Davies's story is a disturbing one:

> What you see and what you don't see on the streets of Chungking, China's capital, give a hint of the situation in Szechuan, which is today the economic and military key to China's future. What you do see is new recruits tied with ropes being led to their quarters under guard of two or three moth-eaten provincials armed with outmoded blunderbusses, newsboys screaming headlines of late war reports, and very few people buying papers.
>
> You see refugees who are an expense to the government, which makes little attempt to use them; you see intelligent people in civilian clothes with nothing to do.
>
> What you don't see is organizers at work. In six weeks

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in Chungking this writer has seen only one street meeting to arouse the people's interest in China's fight. That was one day after the fall of Hankow, and the speaker was an organizer who had come from down river and still clung to the idea that it was essential to instil some spirit into the people. He learned the custom of the interior quickly, and he has not been active on the streets since then.

There were no organized press conferences for foreign correspondents until mid-November. It took weeks of pleading and arguing by the reporters to get that. Even then, the government officials who attended gave out material which any competent correspondent had known about for weeks. The first conference was attended by representatives of the executive, finance, economic, and foreign ministries, one from the Generalissimo's headquarters, and one from the National Relief Commission. Yet this array of important people produced only two small items worth cabling.

Offices are not as well staffed as they should be. At least one government office admits this as its excuse for inefficiency and delay. It is not a good excuse when one remembers the dozens of well-educated young men and women in town who are out of work. Many of these speak foreign languages and had been competent administrators in their own communities prior to Japanese occupation.

Spirit and instruction are lacking in new recruits. Farmers and city laborers are left in the dark as to their country's need. They learn of it when some soldier with a length of rope comes along and ties them like prisoners to other conscripts.

There is a story about another Black Hole of Calcutta. A handful of soldiers were having trouble recently near Chungking. Two or three score conscripts whom they had rounded up obviously did not want to go to the front. They were locked in a single room pending orders for their disposal and promptly forgotten. Because of crowding none of them could lie down; there was no sanitation, no bedding, almost no food or water. Some of the men, not too strong to begin with, died. The rest broke through a door after a week's imprisonment, and ran. Guards shot and killed ten. Some of those recaptured were tortured, had their arms and legs cut off. The remainder, who were eventually sent to the front, managed to escape before they got there.

Peasants around Hsintu, Szechuan, it is reliably reported, were continually harassed by the soldiery, who were conscripting at random, using kidnapping methods. Outraged by the unusually cruel treatment, farmers armed themselves and attacked the town. In the riot that followed it is estimated that there were some twenty casualties on each side. An investigation is being made, but it is almost too late. The spirit of resentment is already awakened.

There is another story, confirmed, of the waste of a group of officers who had graduated from the national military academy and were ready to fill an urgent need for trained men at the front. Just before the fall of Hankow forty young officers left the Szechuan branch of the military academy ready for service. Hankow bound, they reached Ichang when the capital fell. Unable to get in touch with their commander for instructions or to obtain money with which to proceed to another front, they returned to Chungking. Here they found their superior officer, who promised to get their new orders. The forty youths wanted to go north to Wei Lih-wang's army, but their commander disappeared, leaving them stranded, without money, food, or a place to stay. What became of them—or of their superior—is unknown at this writing.

These examples of official incompetence might be explained if the officials were afraid of an aroused populace. Perhaps the distinction between officials and the common people, between governed and governors, is still too strong. The two groups must be welded into one unit bent on blasting invaders out of China. Perhaps there is fear that an aroused people might demand sacrifices or exertion on the part of their officials; they have every right to make those demands if the war is to be carried through. The Generalissimo cannot fight without Szechuan, and Szechuan must realize that. This province is about the only source of man power left. Kwangsi and Kwangtung are milked dry, Yunnan and Kweichow combined have only infinitesimal supplies of men fit for war; in the other provinces are small bands of refugees fleeing west and south. Economically, militarily, in every way, Szechuan is the key to continued resistance, and if this province collapses, the future for China is dark.

Determination must begin with chiefs of departments, government leaders, and executives in Chungking. Defeatist attitudes have no place in a country at war, and passive support is not enough. The only answer to a crisis of this magnitude is organized propaganda to arouse the people to a full realization of what they face and the enthusiasm to face it. For only under the pressure of aroused public opinion will the necessary cooperation, coordination, and discipline be achieved.

DONALD M. DAVIES

Chungking, November 25, 1938

A certain amount of disorganization, inefficiency, and even disloyalty is inevitable in war time. But it is evident that Chiang Kai-shek has something worse than ordinary war-time corruption on his hands in Szechuan. The swiftness with which the Generalissimo acted to purge the Kuomintang ranks of the followers of Wang Ching-wei, once the latter's treachery was revealed, is encouraging. We are particularly glad, in view of Mr. Davies's disclosures, to note that Chiang has named a new Minister of Propaganda to replace Chou Fu-lai, who significantly enough accompanied Wang Ching-wei to Indo-China. It is probable, however, that a further clean-up will be necessary before China's masses can be organized to put up the resistance of which they are capable. The sooner this is done, the sooner China can count on the whole-hearted support from the West to which it is entitled.

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Questions on the Whitney Case

BY I. F. STONE

I

IN RETROSPECT the most striking aspect of the Whitney case is the speed with which it was closed by the authorities in charge of prosecuting it. Richard Whitney was suspended by the New York Stock Exchange on March 8, 1938. The cell doors closed on him at Sing Sing on April 12. The most sensational scandal in the history of the New York Stock Exchange was disposed of with astonishing celerity. Had it not been for the interposition of Chairman Douglas of the SEC, who asked two weeks' delay, sentence would actually have been imposed on March 28. Men of wealth and prominence usually fight charges against them with every device that may serve to delay action or to soften punishment. Whitney placed himself under arrest. The day after his suspension he issued a statement to the press admitting that he had committed wrongful acts, declaring that "none of my partners, none of my business associates *or connections* [my italics] . . . has or had any responsibility or participation" in them, and placing himself "at the disposal of the Attorney General of the state." The Attorney General, John J. Bennett, was for ten years confidential secretary to Edward R. Stettinius, a Morgan partner, but there is no evidence that this had any influence on his handling of the case, and I do not mean to imply that it did.

District Attorney Dewey of New York County obtained the first indictment in the case on March 10. This accused Whitney of stealing $105,000 from a trust fund established by his deceased father-in-law, George R. Sheldon. On March 14 Mr. Bennett obtained his indictment for the theft of $100,000 in bonds from the New York Yacht Club, of which Whitney was treasurer. Pleas of guilty were entered to both indictments, and Whitney's counsel seems to have believed that the guilty pleas would make it possible to avoid public inquiry. "Richard Whitney," the New York *Times* reported on March 22, "was subjected yesterday to the public questioning which his counsel protested last week, as being forestalled by his pleas of guilty to grand larceny." The public questioning did not go very far. On March 21 Assistant Attorney General Ambrose V. McCall elicited the fact that Richard Whitney had borrowed $1,082,000 from his brother, George Whitney, a partner in J. P. Morgan and Company, in November, 1937. The loan was to restore securities and cash Richard Whitney had appropriated to his own use from the gratuity fund of which he was a trustee, a fund established by the Stock Exchange to aid the widows and orphans of members. Leslie Gould, financial editor of the New York *Journal,* had the courage to write in his column the next day: "The Assistant Attorney General . . . did not ask what excuse Richard Whitney had given his brother for the need of such a great sum of money. After all, it wasn't $100. Did Richard Whitney tell his brother he had hypothecated Stock Exchange securities? Did his brother know he was insolvent? Why was the firm allowed to coast along until March 8 . . . ?" Neither the Attorney General nor the District Attorney supplied the answers. It was not until March 30, before the federal referee in bankruptcy, that Richard Whitney admitted that he had confessed the gratuity-fund theft to his brother in November.

II

It is worth noting that when Richard Whitney was expelled from the Exchange on March 17, one of the five counts was the misappropriation of securities belonging to the gratuity fund. This amounted to more than a million dollars, a sum far greater than all the other larcenies combined, and involved a sacred obligation to his own deceased colleagues. The circumstances surrounding the restitution raised grave questions, and the most honorable of men could hardly object if they occurred to a District Attorney in the discharge of his duty. Section 570 of the Penal Code of the State of New York makes it a felony to take "money or property . . . upon an agreement or understanding, express or implied, to compound or conceal a crime, or a violation of a statute, or to abstain from, discontinue, or delay a prosecution therefor, or to withhold any evidence thereof. . . ." Section 580 makes it a misdemeanor for two or more persons to conspire "to commit any act . . . for the perversion or obstruction of justice, or of the due administration of the laws." Had Richard Whitney been indicted for the gratuity-fund embezzlement, the prosecuting officer might have asked himself: How many knew of the offense at the time? Did their silence constitute conspiracy to obstruct justice? Did those who accepted restitution do so "upon an agreement or understanding, express or implied, to . . . conceal a crime"?

This failure to indict on the largest of Whitney's embezzlements may make it easier to understand a curious paragraph which appears in District Attorney Dewey's report to the court on April 9, recommending a "substantial and punitive sentence" for Richard Whitney. "This memorandum," the District Attorney wrote, "does not purport to state or evaluate the responsibility, if any, of

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the authorities or members of the New York Stock Exchange for permitting Richard Whitney and Company to continue in business, *or the time when they acquired knowledge of its financial condition* [my italics, of course]. This matter is the subject of an investigation in progress by the Securities and Exchange Commission." This paragraph has an interesting history. The writer is prepared to state that it did not appear in the original draft as first submitted to Chairman Douglas by the District Attorney. Without that paragraph the reader of the report would assume that the conviction of Whitney was sufficient to close the case.

But an inquiry into possible violations of New York's criminal statutes is not the job of the SEC, and that body was careful to state that its public hearings would "not be directed primarily for the development of the criminal aspects of the case." It is true that the SEC in its report said that those who knew of the gratuity-fund embezzlement and failed to disclose it might in some states (but not in New York) be considered guilty of "the ancient crime of misprision of felony." But the SEC's chief accomplishment was vastly to widen our knowledge of what had actually happened. It condemned the "gentlemen's club" spirit of the Exchange and the "stubborn indifference to the public responsibility of the Exchange as . . . revealed in the testimony of Thomas W. Lamont," but it ended on a note of pious hope. "Happily," the SEC said, "a new management has assumed control of the New York Stock Exchange."

Not so happily, Robert M. Hutchins, president of the University of Chicago, on December 15 resigned as a "public representative" on the Board of Governors of the Exchange. "In the hearings before the Securities and Exchange Commission," Dr. Hutchins wrote, "there was evidence tending to show that members of the Exchange or their partners knew of Richard Whitney's criminal conduct or of the condition of his firm some months before its failure. The public interest, the good name of the Exchange, and the good name of the members referred to all require the Board of Governors to institute proceedings in which the question of the responsibility of these members may finally be disposed of. The decision of the board yesterday to take no action compels me to present my resignation."

III

The unwillingness of the Stock Exchange to act as Dr. Hutchins thought it should can be properly evaluated only in the light of the amazing irresponsibility with which this institution has been conducted. Whitney had been a member of the Exchange since 1912, but as a non-margin broker he was never asked to file a financial report, much less submit to an audit, until 1938. Neither he nor his fellow-trustees seemed to think it strange that he should act both as a trustee of the gratuity fund and as its broker. In the latter capacity he collected his usual fees. "Was there ever any consideration," E. H. H. Simmons, past president of the Exchange and chairman of the trustees, was asked in the SEC investigation, "as to whether it was proper to pay a commission to a trustee for business which he did for the other trustees?" "Never was discussed," Mr. Simmons answered. The trustees did not even seem to regard themselves as trustees. When the SEC examiner said to William B. Potts, secretary and treasurer of the board of trustees, "Well, Mr. Potts, do I understand that the trustees did not regard themselves as acting in a fiduciary capacity?" Mr. Potts replied, "Well, I would say no." Mr. Potts was questioned about how it was that Richard Whitney was able to keep more than a million dollars in gratuity-fund cash and securities from February to November, 1937, and turn them to his own use. Mr. Potts testified that he didn't know that the cash and securities were in Whitney's office.

> *Q.* This provision of the constitution, then, which says that the treasurer shall have the custody of all securities belonging to the fund was never consulted in the daily administration of the fund?
>
> *A.* I would say it was a dead letter.

Although Whitney's retention of the securities and cash was discussed at a special meeting of the trustees on November 22, 1937, there is no mention of the fact in the minutes, and Mr. Simmons did not appear at the next meeting, December 20, to explain what had happened and how he had got the funds back. If one is to judge from the minutes, nobody seemed interested enough to ask. Yet two of the trustees, Allen L. Lindley and Blair S. Williams, were also members of the Business Conduct Committee, which is supposed to police the Exchange. Simmons said he did not suspect criminality but assumed that Whitney had found himself "pressed for cash." Roland L. Redmond, counsel for the Exchange, testified that he also knew of the difficulty of replacing the funds and that George Whitney had helped his brother out of "a financial tight corner." On November 22 Richard Whitney told Simmons that he was too "short-handed" to send over the securities and cash. On November 23 Whitney said he was going to see his brother and would make delivery the next day. Simmons also saw George Whitney. Redmond testified that he was kept informed. He was questioned as to the discrepancy between what Richard Whitney said on November 22 and what he said on November 23.

> *Q.* In other words, you knew right then and there at three o'clock on the 23d that Richard Whitney had not told the truth to Mr. Simmons in the previous conversation?
>
> *A.* That is a fair assumption; yes.
>
> *Q.* Well, you made that assumption, I take it?
>
> *A.* No; I assumed Mr. Whitney had given a convenient excuse the first time to explain why he wished for a delay and the second time he gave an explanation

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of why he was sure he could make delivery the next day.

Q. Do you distinguish now between a convenient excuse and a falsehood?

A. No; I was not attempting to.

Williams, as a trustee and a member of the Business Conduct Committee, was troubled by what happened and at one time seems to have felt that the whole affair should have been brought to the attention of the committee. His testimony on this point is interesting:

Q. I am just trying to find out what reasons prompted you not to go to the Business Conduct Committee following your talk with Mr. Simmons.

A. We felt that there was no necessity, that the whole situation had been cleaned up by the help that Mr. Whitney had received from his brother. . . .

Q. And if he were pressed for cash, that was a matter which concerned the Business Conduct Committee very directly, did it not?

A. Not enough, under the circumstances, when I was told by Mr. Simmons that the whole thing had been fixed up and that everything was right, and that there was no necessity of doing anything about it, and I didn't feel that there was any necessity of doing anything about it.

But Mr. Simmons seems to have changed his mind by March, for Richard Whitney testifying before the SEC on the two occasions when he had seen Charles R. Gay, then president of the Stock Exchange, said:

A. One was on the afternoon of Thursday prior to the 7th of March. I called Mr. Simmons for some reason and got him in Mr. Gay's office and he said he had been trying to find me and would I come over there immediately, which I did. I was then informed by Mr. Gay and Mr. Simmons that a preliminary report had been—or knowledge, perhaps, is a better word—had been conveyed to them regarding the gratuity-fund security situation in November and the extreme seriousness of that situation.

IV

Thomas W. Lamont testified before the SEC that he loaned $1,022,000 to George Whitney in November, 1937, knowing that the loan was to enable Richard Whitney to return securities he had taken illegally from some organization of the Stock Exchange. When asked whether he felt any obligation to report the fact to the Exchange or to the public authorities, Mr. Lamont explained that he believed, "whether justifiable or not, that the Exchange people had knowledge that Mr. Whitney had been slow in his deliveries to them and they have adequate machinery for checking up all their houses of that kind." We have already seen how that machinery failed to work in November, 1937.

If the Morgan firm looked to the Exchange to do its own policing, the Exchange looked to the Morgan firm as a guaranty of Richard Whitney's financial stability and solvency. Whitney's interminable borrowings, according to one witness, were a subject of gossip as far back as 1931. One witness after another testified that the questions that might occur to them in most cases did not occur in Whitney's because of his position as bond broker for J. P. Morgan and Company and his relationship to a Morgan partner. One is compelled to conclude from the testimony of the Morgan partners that they do not find time to follow the details of their business very closely. The firm keeps no minutes of its meetings, and the partners could hardly be described as garrulous on the witness stand. But even on the basis of a meager record it is clear that there were storm signals long before Whitney crashed. I do not mean, and there is no evidence to indicate in any way, that they knew or suspected illegal actions on the part of Richard Whitney. The first to know of this were George Whitney and Lamont in November, 1937. But they do seem, perhaps because of their fondness for both Whitneys, to have asked none of those fearful questions that bankers usually put to their debtors and those through whom they transact business.

Herbert G. Wellington, a governor of the Exchange, testified that as early as 1930 or 1931 the late Thomas Cochran, then a Morgan partner, asked him to form a partnership with Richard Whitney. Mr. Wellington denied that Mr. Cochran expressed concern over Whitney's "reckless handling of money." "As nearly as I can recall," Mr. Wellington testified, "the substance of Mr. Cochran's statement to me was this: 'Mr. Whitney has a very good business, he uses very bad judgment in his investments, but he has got a very good business and he needs a good partner, somebody who isn't just an office boy, as the rest of the partners seem to be. . . .'"

Francis D. Bartow, another Morgan partner, a fellow-director with Richard Whitney at the Corn Exchange Bank, testified that in 1931 he learned that Richard Whitney had obtained an unsecured loan of "two or three hundred thousand dollars" from the bank. Bartow said he spoke to George Whitney about it. They both felt that while a loan of this kind to a director was not "improper," it was "unwise." As a result J. P. Morgan and Company, on June 29, 1931, made an unsecured ninety-day loan of $500,000 to Richard Whitney, from which it was assumed that Whitney would pay off the Corn Exchange loan. Mr. Bartow testified that he didn't know whether the Corn Exchange loan was paid off or not, but when Whitney failed in March, 1938, that ninety-day loan was still outstanding, only $16,000 had been paid off on it. Collateral was put up behind it by George Whitney on two occasions, once in the spring of 1934 when J. P. Morgan and Company was about to have, under the new banking laws, the first examination in history by a state banking examiner. Bartow testified that he and Whitney felt the loan might be questioned. In December, 1934, a $200,000 reserve was set up against the loan, and in October, 1936, when Cochran

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died and J. P. Morgan and Company formed a new partnership, the loan was "left behind" with the old partnership as a "slow debt."

George Whitney was as long suffering as Job in his relations with his brother. Richard Whitney owed him $2,897,000 when he failed. To ask a brother to send a brother to jail is inhuman; one can also understand Mr. Lamont's feelings as a partner. But one might have expected them to exact a promise from Richard Whitney to get out of the brokerage business and the Exchange. George Whitney did not seem to realize the full significance of the embezzlement. It is true that he discussed with his brother the liquidation of Richard Whitney and Company. But when asked, "Did you make as a condition precedent to your loaning the money [to restore the gratuity-fund securities] the condition that he would so liquidate?" George Whitney's answer was, "Not the slightest. Never mentioned the question of liquidation to him until Thanksgiving morning." Later there is an illuminating passage in the George Whitney testimony:

> *Q.* Well, now, were these some of the reasons why you were anxious to see his firm liquidated immediately?
>
> *A.* Oh, they may have been contributing causes, yes.
>
> *Q.* What would you consider to be the principal contributing cause?
>
> *A.* The one I gave you yesterday.
>
> *Q.* His handling of the gratuity-fund securities?
>
> *A.* Oh, certainly not; I never even mentioned that yesterday as a reason.

V

The fact is, of course, that if it had not been for some quite accidental circumstances Richard Whitney would probably still be a highly respected member of the Exchange and might still be misappropriating securities in all safety. A floor trader in January, 1938, thought that distress selling of Greyhound stock was emanating from Richard Whitney and Company. He informed Mr. Wellington, who informed the chairman of the Business Conduct Committee. Under new rules of the Exchange, Richard Whitney and Company would have been required in 1938, for the first time, to answer a financial questionnaire, the so-called "short form" for brokerage houses not engaged in a margin business. It was decided to send it out at once. Unluckily for Richard Whitney, there were a few debit accounts on his books. Consequently it was treated as the financial return of a house dealing in margin accounts. The firm was found to have insufficient capital for a margin house, and as a result it was decided to make an audit of the books; the audit revealed misconduct.

One Morgan partner would have liked to help Whitney even at the last. Francis D. Bartow testified Whitney revealed to him on March 5 that he had misappropriated securities belonging to the New York Yacht Club, the Sheldon estate, and a Mrs. Baird, and that Whitney asked a loan of $280,000 so that he could return these securities and "truthfully" tell the Business Conduct Committee "on Monday morning" that there were no irregularities in his office. Bartow and Randolph Mason, attorney for Whitney, went to Glen Cove, Long Island, to consult John W. Davis. Bartow's testimony on this point is very interesting.

> *Q.* What was Mr. Davis's judgment?
>
> *A.* Mr. Davis gave it to me as his opinion that neither I nor he nor anyone else should do anything or could do anything; anyone who did would run the risk of taking actions that would be misconstrued and misunderstood. He said a lot about preferences in bankruptcy. "All right," I said, "Mr. Davis, I accept your advice and counsel in that. I am glad to come to you. I want to ask one more question. Could I properly call"—I am going a little ahead. I had explained to him that from the beginning of my knowledge of Richard Whitney since January 30, I had been baffled and confused by my inability to get the information that I wanted . . . in the absence of a reliable certified-accountant's report; did he think it would be all right for me to call Mr. Gay, with whom I had previously spoken in the evening, and ask whether it would be possible to postpone for a period of twenty-four hours or even forty-eight hours the Business Conduct Committee hearing that had been scheduled for Monday morning [March 9] at 10:30.
>
> Mr. Davis gave it to me as his opinion that there was no reason why I should not do it.

Gay refused to postpone action. Certain questions arise here: if it was Mr. Davis's advice in March not to lend Richard Whitney money to make restitution because it might be "misconstrued and misunderstood," what would have been his advice in November? Why did he think it might be "misconstrued"?

The reader who compares Mr. Gay's refusal to postpone action and his expulsion of Richard Whitney with the conditions revealed by Dr. Hutchins's letter may wonder which is the "reform" administration of the Exchange—the present Martin administration or Mr. Gay's, bad as it may otherwise have been?

The ghost of the Whitney case still walks. Had the case closed with the convictions obtained by Attorney General Bennett and District Attorney Dewey, we should know only a part of what we now know about it. They were—to put it mildly—hasty. But the SEC, to which we owe most of our knowledge of the case, was too optimistic. The "reformed" management of the Exchange has done its best to write *finis* to the story. Chairman Douglas now says, "For the SEC, as for the Exchange, the Whitney case is closed." Must there be a Congressional investigation to answer questions which still remain unanswered?

The biggest question of all is why neither Attorney General Bennett nor District Attorney Dewey saw fit to indict Whitney for his greatest breach of trust.

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Living Philosophies

VIII. WHY I AM A MARXIST

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

I HAVE, I suppose, been a socialist in some degree ever since the last years of my schooldays. When I try to think out the sources of a faith that has been the central conviction of my life, I find that the difficulties of sorting them out are immense. Something was due to the influence of a great schoolmaster who made us feel the sickness of an acquisitive society. Something, too, was the outcome of a Jewish upbringing, the sense it conferred of being treated differently from other people and for no obviously assignable cause. I learned a good deal from books, especially from those of Sidney and Beatrice Webb. They made me realize that a whole class of human beings was overlooked in the traditional liberalism of the family to which I belonged. And there stays in my mind a speech I heard in Manchester as a boy on the threshold of a university career from Keir Hardie, whose account of the effort of the Scottish miners to form a trade union made me begin, at least dimly, to understand the price the workers have to pay for the social reform they achieve.

I went up to Oxford with radical views, and my years there confirmed me in them. It was the first experience I had of the intensity of class division in England. It was the first experience I had, also, of the resistance atmosphere can impose upon the admission of new ideas, which are dismissed less because they have been examined than because their premises are outside the environment they seek to penetrate. My debt to Oxford is immeasurable. Contact there with the late Professor Dicey, with Mr. Herbert Fisher and Professor Ernest Barker was, on the purely academic plane, a superb experience. But they were all, if I may so phrase it, aloof from life. Oxford generally, so far as its teachers were concerned, thought about social problems in a way which suggested interest in them but not responsibility for their solution. It told you, as it were, that correct analysis was important. It did not suggest that, when the analysis was made, any obligation emerged to act upon the principles it suggested.

I devoted a good deal of time at Oxford to the Fabian Society and to propaganda in behalf of woman suffrage. These brought me into contact with two of the greatest men I have ever known—George Lansbury and H. W. Nevinson. From the first I learned the meaning and importance of equality, and from the second the meaning and importance of liberty. George Lansbury, too, gave me my first job. He was then editing the *Daily Herald,* and when I left Oxford, in the summer of 1914, he asked me to write editorials for his paper. That was a significant experience for me. It brought me into contact with a good deal of what was most radical in the pre-war Socialist movement, and it made me formulate to myself, in a coherent way, some of the lessons I had learned at Oxford. Contact with Lansbury was a great education. He was absolutely straightforward, absolutely democratic, and entirely fearless. He always meant every word he said, and it never occurred to him to say less than he meant. Through him I got my first chance to see the inside of the Socialist movement at first hand, and that at a critical time.

Within six weeks of my going to the *Herald* Great Britain was at war. I sought to enlist on the first day. I did not believe in the war, but I did believe that, on the whole, the victory of Germany would mean more evil than its defeat. I was rejected on physical grounds, mainly a weak heart. That rejection altered the whole course of my life. For I was asked, through the influence of Herbert Fisher, to take a lectureship in history at McGill University to replace an Oxford don who was anxious to serve. I accepted the invitation expecting to stay a year on the American continent. Instead, I remained there, first at McGill and then, for four years, at Harvard, until 1920.

There is, I think, a sense in which my years on the American continent were the most fundamental experience of my life. I learned there that it was my vocation to be a teacher, that, in whatever other fields I might wander, this was the activity, above all, to which I should devote my energies. I learned, secondly, that to teach political science, it was not enough to read books; one had to learn politics from actual experience of their working, and to seek to make of one's lectures an intimate marriage of theory and practice. I learned, thirdly, that the university scene in America was vitally related to the social environment. One could speculate freely, but one must not question the basic assumptions of the system. When I was at McGill, I made a speech attacking the "bitter-endism" of Mr. Lloyd George that was immediately followed by urgent demands for my dismissal. When I was at Harvard, the famous Boston police strike occurred. President Lowell immediately offered the services of the university to the city. It seemed

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to me that one ought to know why the police were striking before one accepted the view that the city was right. Accordingly, I took great pains to discover what had led to the strike, and found that it was the outcome of long-accumulated grievances met without sympathy or insight. I ventured to say so; and there broke about my head a storm of indignation in which I was described as almost everything from a villain who seduced youth to a Bolshevik who preached revolution. I was solemnly investigated by the Overseers of the university; and though it was decided that I was not to be dismissed, President Lowell explained to me with emphasis that a teacher limited his utility when he spoke on matters of current controversy. I was not, I inferred, to say my say on the living issues of the time if what I said was inconvenient to the rulers of Harvard. Thus though I loved Harvard and found there friendships of inestimable value to me, I was not sorry when, in the next year, the London School of Economics and Political Science invited me to join its faculty. There I have remained since 1920; and there I hope to remain during my life as a teacher.

But it was not only that I learned in America what I believe to be my vocation. I saw there, more nakedly than I had seen in Europe, the significance of the struggle between capital and labor. I learned how little meaning there can be in an abstract political liberty which is subdued to the control of an economic plutocracy. I saw, too, in strikes like those of Ludlow and Lowell, how the vast machinery of the state is used to crush any movement that questions the authority of those who own economic power. I learned from the imprisonment of Debs and the attacks on La Follette how immense are the pressures to conformity, how fragile the claims of tolerance, whenever the security of a social order is threatened. Not least, I began to perceive, in the difference in the average American attitude to the February and October revolutions in Russia, how profound is the influence of the property relation in shaping opinion. I came back from America convinced that liberty has no meaning save in the context of equality, and I had begun to understand that equality also has no meaning unless the instruments of production are socially owned. But I was still academic enough in experience to believe that this could be proved on rational grounds, and that its proof would be sufficient to win acceptance for it as a principle of social organization. I had associated in America mostly with progressive or academic people who were accustomed to give argument its due weight; and even when, like Mr. Justice Holmes, they were fundamentally conservative in outlook, they were prepared to change their views in the light of discussion. Up to 1920, I think, as I look back, that my socialism was above all the outcome of a sense of the injustice of things as they were. It had not become an insight into the processes of history.

That, I believe, is the main burden of my experience in the eighteen years since I returned to England. They have been full years. From the outset I have been an active member of the Labor Party. I have served on government committees. I have "deviled" for ministers during the two periods when a Labor government was in power. I have done a good deal of industrial arbitration. I have helped the trade unions in every important strike, especially the general strike of 1926. Teaching and the writing of books apart, most of my leisure has gone into work for socialism. I learned a great deal from five years as an alderman of a London borough. I have seen, too, a good deal of political journalism from within, not least in those four last brilliant years in which H. W. Massingham edited the London *Nation*. I have been closely concerned with the adult-education movement. Invitations to lecture abroad have given me first-hand acquaintance with the politics and the universities of France and Spain, pre-Hitler Germany, and the Soviet Union; and I have returned constantly to America.

Out of it all, the great lesson I have learned is the broad truth of the Marxian philosophy. What I have seen at first hand, no less than what I have read, has left me no alternative. I came back to England in 1920 hopeful that I was going to watch the slow permeation of economic relationships by the democratic principle. I have been driven to the conclusion that no class voluntarily abdicates from the possession of power. I have come to learn that the private ownership of the means of production makes it impossible for the democratic idea to transcend the barriers of class without the capture of the state power by the working class. The experience of Russia, the advent of fascism in Central and Southeastern Europe, the attitude of the owning class in Spain and France and the United States to all serious attempts at social reform, the general strike of 1926 and the betrayal of 1931 in England, the new imperialisms of Japan and Italy, have all convinced me that, in large outline, there is no answer to the philosophy of Marx. Men, broadly, think in terms of an experience made and unmade by their class position. Their conceptions of right action are born of the inferences they draw from the experience of that class position. Individuals may transcend it. But taken generally, all our institutions and their working are conditioned by the property relations of any given society. The dominant ideas and principles of that society will be set by the way in which, in any moment, its property relations are working. If they are working well, there will be a period of concession to the multitude, which can live only by the sale of its labor power. If they are working badly, the policy of concession will halt. A system which lives by profit must make profit. If its power to do so is challenged, the owners of the system will seek to destroy the men and the movements which challenge that power.

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This is the reason for the decline of liberalism in the post-war epoch. Ours is that age, the coming of which was foreseen by Marx, in which the relations of production are in contradiction with the essential forces of production. Our time is comparable to that of the Reformation, when a similar contradiction appeared. Then as now a new property relation was essential, and then as now those who lived by the privileges inherent in the old were ready to fight for them rather than find the terms of a new accommodation. For when such a contradiction reaches its maturity, the price of continuing concession means the erosion of the privileges associated with private ownership. It means a scale of taxation fatal to the making of profit in international competition. It compels that examination of social foundations which, because it disturbs traditional routines, destroys men's ability to be tolerant in matters of social constitution. For those who have been taught by long use to regard privilege as right are rarely able to adjust themselves to the admission that their right may be built upon what other men have come to experience as wrong.

It is, as I think, in this background that all the central problems of our time have to be set. That it makes the future of capitalist democracy dubious is clear. That the inference from it, in the international sphere, is the necessary relation between capitalism and war is clear also. For, given the present distribution of economic power, the owning class is driven into the search for markets abroad in order to win profit. Thence comes the need for armament. Thence comes also the politics of imperialism, concession-hunting, spheres of influence—that whole gamut of power politics to which the world since 1919 has so grimly accustomed us. The failure of the League of Nations is built upon the fact that it demands from its members the surrender of the policy to which the whole inherent logic of their economic system impels them. We have either to find the way to a resumption of the economic expansion of the Victorian Age or enter upon—as we have already entered—a period of war and revolution. But we cannot resume that expansion unless we adjust the relations of production in our society to the potential forces of production. Unless we do so, we are bound to have poverty in the midst of potential plenty, restrictionism, that economic nationalism which, all over the world, is lowering the standard of life. Since the state power is directed by men who live by the vested interests represented by these policies, it is at least difficult, and probably impossible, to transcend them within the limits of existing class relations.

I know no other way of explaining adequately the position in which our generation finds itself. The conclusion I draw from it is the necessity of a unified working-class party able either to win political power or, if it meets the challenge of fascism, to emerge victorious from the conflict. The lesson of Germany and Italy is the clear one that division of the working class means its defeat. The lesson of France and Spain is the equally clear one that the attainment of unity at the least enables the working class to give a good account of itself when the challenge comes. And the evidence makes it plain that capitalism in its phase of contraction will respect no principle, however venerable, in its effort to retain the power of the state in its hands. That has been the experience of M. Blum in France; it has been, also, the experience of Mr. Roosevelt in the United States. Each had a great popular majority behind him. Each found that the power of his majority was largely nullified by the refusal of the propertied class to cooperate with his purposes. At the historical stage we have reached, the will of the people is unable to use the institutions of capitalist democracy for democratic purposes. For at this stage democracy needs to transform class relations in order to affirm itself; and it will not be allowed to do so if the owning class is able to prevent that achievement.

This attitude seems to me the explicit result of post-war experience, and it is, as I have said, the vindication of the analysis that Marx made of social phenomena nearly a century ago. Certain modes of behavior that I profoundly respect are, I think, ruled out of court by the inferences it involves. It is incompatible with the pacifist doctrine of non-resistance. Had that way been chosen by the Spanish government, it would now be under the heel of a fascist conqueror as brutal in his methods as Hitler. It rules out, also, the Fabian method of gradualism. That principle was the natural method to recommend in an age of capitalist expansion. In the period of capitalism's decline, its result would, I think, be to give to the owning class a supreme opportunity to organize itself for counter-attack. The real lesson of post-war Germany is the futility of trying to reorganize the economic foundations of capitalism by half-measures. That, again, is the inference I would draw from the experience of the two Labor governments in Great Britain. Each was more anxious to prove its orthodox respectability to its opponents than it was to get on with the work of socialism, to which it was committed by public profession. The result was to discourage its friends and to persuade its enemies that the price of social reform was greater than capitalism could afford. The time has come for a central attack on the structure of capitalism. Nothing less than wholesale socialization can remedy the position. The alternative in all Western civilization outside the Soviet Union is, I believe, a rapid drift to fascism, in which the working class will be at a definite disadvantage by reason of the division of its forces. That division has already cost it Italy and Germany. It may one day cost it England and the United States as well. In that event, we shall see a new iron age descend upon mankind in which the very memory of civilized living may well become no more than a traditional legend.

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Democracy Wins in Chile

BY FREDA KIRCHWEY

Santiago, Chile, December 30

ON September 5, 1938, an armed revolt organized by the Chile Nacista Party was put down with brutal vigor by the Alessandri government then in power, and from 61 to 100 young men were killed, most of them unnecessarily and in cold blood.

On October 25 the Presidential election was held and Pedro Aguirre Cerda, candidate of a broad popular front, was chosen President, defeating the reactionary Gustavo Ross, who was backed by most upper-class Chileans and foreign business.

On December 24 Aguirre Cerda was inaugurated, and that same night he freed the Nacistas, including their leader, Gonzalez von Maree, who had been in prison since the uprising.

The West Coast of South America is four thousand miles long, but news and rumor run from one part to the next, and what is said in Panama is repeated in Callao and so on down. From the moment the Santa Maria left the Canal on December 9 we heard one opinion expressed over and over in tones of satisfaction or resentment. "Aguirre Cerda will never come to office." "The business interests and the conservatives will never allow Aguirre to become President." "There will be some sort of a coup before the inauguration." If wishes were horses, Aguirre Cerda would have been unseated by a cavalry charge. Such comments are only the surface expressions of more solid and unpleasant facts. It is a fact, for example, and a shameful one, that North American business firms helped to finance Ross's campaign. Let this be remembered if these firms complain of "unfair" treatment at the hands of the new government.

The workers of Chile are horribly poor. It is hard to compare wages, especially where the currency is depreciated. The Chilean peso, which was formerly worth about 12 cents, now ranges from 25 to 31 to the dollar. In these terms, Chilean workers earn from as little as 5 cents a day on the farms in the south—and even less for casual labor—to about 75 cents in the best foreign-owned copper mines. Other wages can be roughly gauged by these.

The working-class districts of Santiago are dirty and dilapidated. Whole families, big ones, live in a single room, and the toilet arrangements make even an old-law tenement in New York seem sanitary by comparison. There is much tuberculosis and syphilis. Chile's ragged workers must be seen if the country's problem is to be understood and if the frenzied joy of the last few days is to have its full meaning.

On the afternoon of December 24 the stores were closed and the streets jammed. By the time we reached the doors of the Congreso where the "Transmission of the Mandate" took place, a mob of fighting ticket-holders was ahead of us. Finally the officer at the main entrance to the grounds shoved us through a barred gate, and we found ourselves pressed into a solid mass that lined the walk from the gate to the pillared portico of the parliament building. And there we discovered why card-holders—even those with the potent word *Prensa* on their tickets—were kept on the street: the people had got in ahead. All around us, on every step, clinging to every pillar, standing on benches and rails and one another's feet, was a mass of tense excited citizens. All classes were among them, but ten to one the crowd was proletarian —men and women straight from the slums of Santiago. Inside the building, when the doors opened, I saw a crowd, equally solid, with a bigger proportion of well-dressed people—officials and party workers and invited guests. But the "common man" was there too, in numbers. He didn't need to be invited; he had voted Aguirre into office and this was his show.

It proceeded with strict conformity to tradition. Troops marched up to the gates of the grounds and formed a guard of honor at the entrance. Cars arrived with representatives from all the embassies and special representatives sent by a few of the more friendly governments. None of these bore obvious emblems of their origins, but the crowd, by what seemed a miracle of intuition, knew in almost every case. The Mexicans were welcomed with shouts of approval and a sea of clenched fists; so in less degree were the Colombian delegates. But the loudest cries of *Frente Popular* and *Viva* were saved for Prieto and the Spanish Ambassador; and next to them in order of popular approval were the Chinese. The Germans and Japanese had reason to feel that they were running a gauntlet of threatening hostility; they walked by with impassive expressions. No physical demonstration was made, but a chorus of hisses followed them up the steps. The Papal Nuncio and his delegation had a mixed reception—some clapping, a few hisses, a few lifted fists, but for the most part stolid silence.

Alessandri arrived in a state carriage. The outgoing President was quitting office under the dark cloud of

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September. But he had, against all predictions, allowed free elections. And he was now about to transmit to his chosen successor the Presidential mandate—not to mention the ribbon of office and the Star of O'Higgins. He was cheered by a part of the crowd when his carriage stopped at the gates, and a few people—were they followers or opponents?—lifted their palms in a fascist salute. But the majority were unfriendly and openly triumphant. He stepped out of the carriage and made his way to the Congreso through fists raised like flags. Some voices shouted, "Murderer!" He went up the steps, shoving through with the help of his attendants and the police, and was greeted by a throng inside only a little less hostile.

The end of the ceremony came soon and suddenly. The doors opened. A few carabineros struggled to force back the people. A shout went up. Then a small compact group with a small, square-faced man in the center pushed toward the steps. Roars of joy met him. "Aguirre Cerda." "Nuestro Presidente!" "Nueva Chile!" "Frente Popular!" They roared and waved their fists and filled the whole portico. The President pushed through; he was swept down the stairs by the crowd; he was hustled and mashed by people as closely packed as in a subway rush. The carabineros were no protection; they tried only to get him to the gates. Finally he reached the waiting carriage. He stood and smiled and waved, accepting the crowd and its emotion. A North American made the callous comment: "He's a Santa Claus with an empty bag." There is just enough truth in this to make the future precarious.

Two nights later Prieto spoke at a meeting of the left parties. He said that clenched fists and cheers were all right to start things off, but serious action was needed to keep them going. He said that the new government in Chile was full of promise—but Spain had had a good popular-front government, too. He said that Chile might well become another Spain; that the right would not simply resign itself to defeat. Chile must prepare to defend its new administration by strong constitutional measures so that it would not have to defend it with arms. First of all, he said, Chile must take action to remove from key positions the reactionaries that were still in office. And the parties of the left must remain united and strong and resist the temptation to quarrel over minor differences.

Aguirre had the backing of a coalition of his own party, the Radicals, and a group of parties to the left—Socialists, Communists, and Democraticos. In addition he was supported by a more equivocally left group—the Nacistas, Union Socialists, and the followers of General Ibañez, whom the attempted coup of September would have put into office. It is a confused front including many conflicting elements. Almost certainly it will crumble at the edges. If Aguirre remains in power, his main strength will rest in the Socialists and Radicals—the two largest left parties. With their support he may be able to carry on a vigorous reform administration.

One danger lies in the defeated but unreconciled right, composed chiefly of the big interests, both Chilean and North American. It is biding its time, waiting for the new government to make its first mistake or get bogged down in its difficulties. Then it probably will move—independent political observers and newspapermen seem to agree on this; but no one pretends to know who will come forward as Chile's would-be Franco.

Another danger, less clearly, lurks on the left. The Nacistas are a fast-growing party of highly dynamic possibilities. They carried through the disastrous putsch of September, but as the election returns proved, they emerged from that ill-timed and reckless venture stronger than before. In the campaign they swung their support from their former choice, General Ibañez, then in jail, to Aguirre Cerda. Although their chief surviving leaders were also in prison during the campaign, the Nacistas contributed some 25,000 votes to the Popular Front candidate.

I saw the head of the party, Gonzalez von Maree, in jail about two days before Aguirre's inauguration. He is an attractive, vigorous person with great self-confidence. He insists with every evidence of sincerity that his party has no connection, actual or ideological, with the German Nazis. He disclaims anti-Semitism; admits no sympathy for dictatorship. He even repudiates violence and non-constitutional methods, and insists that his party will loyally support the government. He proclaims as his chief aim the formation of a single left party with a program of anti-imperialism and the nationalization of agricultural lands, natural resources, and major industries. He is strongly nationalist; but nationalism seems to be a common denominator of most left parties today. It is not necessary to doubt Gonzalez's honesty. It is necessary to question his stability and judgment. Whatever he now believes, before September he was an open advocate of violence, and it is certain that if his attempt had succeeded, Ibañez would have been made dictator. For these reasons the adhesion of the Nacistas is an element of uncertainty as well as of strength to the left. In January the Nacistas will hold a convention and announce their new program; they plan also to change their name, which has become a burden in the pursuit of avowedly democratic aims. Their future importance and their relation to the new government may be decided at that meeting.

Aguirre Cerda is a homely, swarthy man with an attractive smile. He deserted his first Cabinet meeting to talk to us, and he spoke with apparent freedom. He is a moderate—socially and politically. Popular education is his chief passion; that and public health he puts at the

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top of his program. He intends to extend the already radical provisions for social insurance and public housing. He is, in short, a New Dealer. Unfortunately his country is poor—and New Deals seem to come high—but fortunately it has a balanced budget. Taxes are low, especially on incomes and profits from land, and it should be possible to raise money by taxing the big landowners and the industries. It should be, but will it? Added taxes are one of the chief things the rightists fear. The price of genuine reform may be revolution on the right. Aguirre knows it.

I asked him directly what his policy would be toward foreign investments. He said that his country needed capital and new industries. He would encourage foreign enterprises in Chile, "especially businesses operated by persons living in the country." He said that it was to be understood that foreign capital must accept all the conditions imposed upon domestic business; there would be no special privileges under his administration. Aguirre realizes that Chile must not make Spain's mistake of allowing rightist officials and military men to continue in key posts. This is indicated by the speed with which he displaced certain high army officers and the heads of several departments. It may prove fortunate for the new Chile that Indalecio Prieto is in Santiago during these first days.

The importance of the change in Chile is great. It is likely to be underestimated in the United States. But no one should be misled by the paucity of Chilean news in the North American press; that is just an old North American custom in dealing with our good neighbors. The change of government in Chile was a conquest by democratic methods and a left program of one of the three most important countries on this continent. In the end the only hope for democracy in our time and in our hemisphere lies in the spread of democracy; it is not to be found in ambiguous resolutions adopted under the benevolent auspices of dictatorships.

If Mr. Roosevelt and Mr. Hull really care about ridding Latin America of fascism they will go farther out of their way than they have yet gone to prove their friendship for the new regime in Chile. Many Chileans hoped that Mr. Hull would represent President Roosevelt at the recent inauguration. His presence would have demonstrated a genuine interest and would have been enormously appreciated. It would be equally useful if our very amiable ambassador, Norman Armour, would draw into his wide circle of friends in Santiago more of the prominent leftist leaders—who include, incidentally, most of the chief intellectuals of the country. And surely the President and the State Department could make plain their disapproval of financial and political meddling in Chile's internal affairs by North American business firms. When a reactionary candidate with known dictatorial intentions is staked financially by our business men in Chile, ordinary Chileans are apt to smile at solemn warnings from Washington about "foreign propaganda" and "fascist penetration." Strangely enough, in the face of all the facts, they still trust Mr. Roosevelt, though they cannot understand how he squares his maintenance of the Spanish embargo with his anti-fascist position. But as a Chilean writer said to me just after the inauguration: "The Roosevelt Administration will soon end, but imperialism goes on."

The Press and the NLRB

BY MARY BARTLETT

THE press, says *Editor and Publisher*, "presents the daily history of the world in proper perspective." If that is the intention it must be apparent by now that at least in the case of the National Labor Relations Board an overwhelming number of newspapers suffer from a pronounced astigmatism. With the new Congress receptive to proposed changes in the Wagner Act, it is a dead certainty that this affliction will become even more acute.

Consider, for example, the different press treatment accorded two decisions on the powers of the NLRB, both handed down by lower courts before the Supreme Court upheld the National Labor Relations Act on April 12, 1937. One court ruled that the board did not have jurisdiction over labor relations in a manufacturing plant, the Jones and Laughlin Company. Another court upheld the board's jurisdiction in the case of a wire service, the Associated Press. The Division of Press Intelligence, a federal agency, clips stories on government activities carried in newspapers all over the country. A count of D. P. I. clippings reveals the following illuminating facts: stories of the Jones and Laughlin decision, which was unfavorable to the board, appeared in 128 papers, to a total of 1,428 inches; the Associated Press decision, favorable to the board, appeared in 17 papers to a total of 167 inches. In each of these cases the circuit court was deciding whether the board had jurisdiction over labor relations in a particular enterprise; it was rendering no opinion on the board's jurisdiction in other types of industry. Yet headlines on the Jones and Laughlin case

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ran: "Wagner Board Is Held Powerless. New Deal Labor Act Unconstitutional." Few of the newspaper stories mentioned that the decisions were subject to review by a higher court.

The astigmatism of the press is revealed in the varying emphasis which it gives to stories about the NLRB—a story unfavorable to the board is played up in editorial and news columns more than a favorable story—and in the inaccuracy of its account, news articles, headlines, and editorials often telling a tale not based on facts. When Senator Nye blasted the Labor Act in July, 1937, fifty papers in the country, according to Division of Press Intelligence clippings, published sixty-three editorials using all the rubber stamps against the board without any specific reference to the board's record. But only thirty-four of the papers covered by the D. P. I. carried any reference in news or editorial columns to Roosevelt's statement in March, 1938, that the act should not be amended this year and that it had received unfair treatment by the press.

Similarly handled were the stories of Senator Burke's proposal early last year to investigate the board. On January 27 and 28 seventy-one papers of those covered by the D. P. I. carried an Associated Press story in several columns giving Burke's charges. But only five papers used the A. P. story of January 29, which quoted a letter from the A. F. of L. opposing the investigation. And only thirteen of the seventy-five papers which carried the A. P. version of Chairman Madden's reply to Senator Burke did not cut the story down to a few scant paragraphs. The sixty-two papers which rewrote the A. P. report of Madden's scholarly reply printed a story like that which appeared in the Macon, Georgia, *Telegraph* of February 4:

> The National Labor Relations Board is not biased and has no "starry-eyed" illusions about remaking the social order, Board Chairman J. Warren Madden testified before a Senate committee today.
>
> This was his reply to frequent accusations of partiality and radicalism. . . .

When the investigation was "indefinitely postponed," only ten papers carried the A. P. dispatch, the item not exceeding three paragraphs in any of them.

Behind this distortion there often appears an intent to thwart the purpose of the act. The Columbus *Dispatch*, for instance, five days after the NLRB was upheld by the Supreme Court, commented bitterly that the verdict had not lessened labor disputes. As if to arouse feeling against the act, the Charleston *News and Courier* queried in April, 1937:

> Do not the court's decisions point the way to coerce Southern cotton mills in which only white persons work? What if groups of Negroes, instigated and financed from New York, ask for employment in Southern mills? What if this matter should be tested?

Deliberately encouraging labor disputes, the Lewiston *Sun*, February, 1938, cried:

> Employers ought to refuse to have anything to do with the National Labor Board. They ought to fight it out and fight it out even if they have to go to jail. Fight it out as one of the fundamental principles of American liberty.

Yet it is the NLRB, according to the press, that fosters labor disputes.

Among other false charges which the press brings against the board is that of partisanship for the C. I. O. "Unless we miss our guess," the Cedar Rapids *Gazette* ventured in April, 1937, "the chances are that the C. I. O. does not represent a majority in any major industry." Yet from October, 1935, to December, 1937, the C. I. O. won 452 out of the 906 NLRB elections (*Monthly Labor Review*, July, 1938). "The C. I. O.-controlled labor board" is a common press designation of the NLRB. Yet an actual count of board decisions in disputes between C. I. O. and A. F. of L., according to an article in *Fortune* for October, 1938, gives the A. F. of L. a greater number of favorable decisions.

Another newspaper charge has been that the board restricts freedom of the press. During the Hartley Barclay discussion in December, 1937, the board summoned to the witness stand the editor of *Mill and Factory*, a trade publication which had printed an adverse story on the NLRB which was subsequently reprinted and distributed to employees of the National Steel Company at Weirton. The issue was whether the article was a creation of the steel company, on trial for unfair labor practices, and the purpose of the board in calling the editor to the stand was purely informative. Yet many papers pretended to see this as an attempt to punish and muzzle an editor. The San José *Mercury Herald's* comment was typical:

> The issuance implies the publisher committed an offense in printing the article in his magazine and that the board had the power to inquire into it . . . and to inflict suitable punishment.

How quickly an editorial writer will seize upon a statement which apparently discredits the board is illustrated by an editorial which appeared in the Arizona *Republic* for February 26, 1938. Someone intrusted with reporting the news had added two ciphers to the board's appropriation, which is just under $3,000,000. Immediately an editorial cited with horror $300,000,000 as the sum.

News stories on the Burke charges reached a low for accuracy. In connection with Burke's proposed investigation Senator Neely read a statement by Supreme Court Justice Stanley Reed, then Solicitor General, saying in part, ". . . I should like to bear witness that in these difficult situations the record of the board bore unmistakable evidence of careful and impartial hearings, with every protection to the rights of all contestants." Omit-

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ting this sentence entirely the Washington *Star* printed only that part of the statement which led up to the bouquet and covered the matter in a headline which ran: "Neely Reads Reed Statement Urging Reticence in Condemning Body of Bias."

Praising the board in superlatives, the Honorable Elbert D. Thomas brought his testimony to a climax with ". . . something almost miraculous has been done in the setting up of the Labor Relations Board." He saw no need for an investigation, and referred incidentally to his work with the Maritime Committee as a burden on his time. "Senator Thomas," went the Associated Press version, "told the judiciary subcommittee that he opposed an investigation now on the grounds that it would handicap the Senate-House Maritime Committee efforts to adjust maritime labor laws."

The same malicious distortion occurred last May when the Supreme Court declared unconstitutional a decision rendered by the Department of Agriculture in the Kansas City Stockyards case because no intermediate report had been issued. In cases in which prompt decisions were desired, the NLRB also had on occasion omitted a trial examiner's report. In each case the company could have defended itself in oral argument before the decision had it so desired, but in order to square its procedure completely with the court's verdict, the board withdrew five decisions so that it might issue an intermediate report. It had no intention of altering the decisions, but news reports put their own interpretation on the board's scrupulousness. Typical headlines were the following:

> NLRB Appears Loser to Ford (Buffalo *Times*).
>
> Rehearing of All Pending Cases Hinted (Evansville *Press*).
>
> Labor Board May Back Up on Big Cases (Milwaukee *Journal*).

With no factual basis whatever, a story appeared in the New York *Herald Tribune* for October 3, 1938, headed:

> "Slow-Down" Hits U. S. Agencies as C. I. O. Organizes Employees. NLRB and Labor Department Among Bureaus Whose Overworked Staffs Deliberately Run Behind; Actual Sitdowns Feared Next.

When the Washington *Post* picked up this same story, a protest from the board evoked the following apology from the managing editor:

> . . . I have no defense whatever of the original article. I believe it was a bad story in every way. . . . This story, furnished by a news service, was allowed to slip by without proper investigation.

The anti-labor interests of the press have been exposed frequently enough to show that its astigmatism in NLRB stories is superinduced. Big business has found devious ways to evade the act; the press will find more devious ways to defame the board.

In the Wind

IN DENMARK the Nazis have registered one of their most decisive victories over the press. The victim is the *Berlingske Tidende,* Copenhagen's oldest and second-largest daily. After Munich that paper's foreign editor was dismissed on direct order of the German legation, and its editorial policy became belligerently pro-German. Now a new "foreign expert" has been appointed, one Baron von Rheinbaben, a German, a member of the Nazi Party, and, of course, a publicist for the Third Reich.

CHIEFTAINS OF the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party are weighing reports they have received of a rift between the new Republican Governor, Harold E. Stassen, and Old Guard G. O. P. leaders. Stassen, like many other Republican candidates last November, indulged freely in liberal rhetoric; now, according to these reports, he wants to live up to his speeches. The Old Guard says no.

WHAT HAPPENED when Ambassador Kennedy conferred with George S. Messersmith, Assistant Secretary of State, shortly after Kennedy's return from London? The meeting, of course, was private, but when Kennedy emerged he was visibly angry. Messersmith, it is reported, displayed the same mood.

WHEN MEXICAN film exhibitors planned recently to show a Spanish-language film made in Berlin, members of the movie unions threatened to strike in protest. Finally they consented to work on condition that the first day's receipts from the Nazi film go to Loyalist Spain. They collected 3,000 pesos; the next day the picture was withdrawn.

SOME WEEKS ago Mr. M. S. Reynolds, a resident of Vancouver, wrote a letter to Neville Chamberlain criticizing British foreign policy. Shortly afterward—on November 23—Mr. Reynolds was visited by two plain-clothes members of the Royal Canadian Northwest Mounted Police. Producing a copy of the letter he had sent to Chamberlain and of another he had sent to Lord Lloyd, they warned him not to write such letters again. Mr. Reynolds reported these facts to the editors of the London *Tribune,* and added that he told his inquisitors he would keep on writing "just so long as postage stamps are available."

THE REPORT of the Senate Committee on Campaign Expenditures contained a protest by Senator Bulkley of Ohio against the allegedly excessive expenditures of Robert A. Taft, victorious Republican candidate. The Cleveland *Press* ran this headline on the continuation of the story: "U. S. Probers Cite Expenses of Taft Race; Report $159,451 Spent on Office." Directly below appeared a Washington dispatch headlined: "Economy Is Taft's Slogan as He Takes Senate Seat."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

THE President's message to Congress, though unusually eloquent and able, is the mixture of good and bad, and of facing both ways, characteristic of the skilled politician that he is. It goes without saying that his defense of democracy will move profoundly every loyal American heart, and we must be especially grateful for his complete recognition of the fact that the truest defense for any democracy against fascism or communism is a contented and prosperous people, governed with equity and justice. "Our own hourglass tells us," he says, "that we are off on a race to make democracy work, so that we may be efficient in peace and therefore secure in self-defense." Elsewhere he says: "Our nation's program of social and economic reform is therefore a part of defense as basic as armaments themselves." The latter is only half the truth. Social and economic reform is infinitely more important than armaments, which, as Calvin Coolidge said, never kept any country out of war or insured its victory.

It is pleasant to record also that the President realizes now more clearly than in the past that there are better ways of bringing pressure to bear on international wrongdoing than going to war. The passage is worth quoting here:

> Words may be futile, but war is not the only means of commanding a decent respect for the opinions of mankind. There are many methods short of war, but stronger and more effective than mere words, of bringing home to aggressor governments the aggregate sentiments of our own people.

This is what I and many others have been preaching for many years. To be logical and truthful the President should have gone on to say that the World War has clearly proved that you cannot safeguard or enforce democracy by mass murder, that no nation can win a war, that war reduces every nation to despair because of the inevitable economic collapse after the orgy of destruction is over, that every modern war gives rise to new evils which cannot be foreseen and fortifies the hold of militarism upon the peoples of the world.

Mr. Roosevelt failed to say this because, though he now realizes that there are other weapons in our arsenal besides war, he still thinks many of the outmoded thoughts of the past. He still believes that "weapons of defense" give the only safety. Not only is he now eager for armed forces and defenses, but he wishes them "strong enough to ward off sudden attack against strategic positions and key facilities essential to insure sustained resistance and ultimate victory." He adds that "we must have the organization and location of those key facilities so that they may be immediately utilized and rapidly expanded to meet all needs without danger of serious interruption by enemy attack." That is laying down a wholly new defense plan, under cover of which the country may easily run into endless expense and almost complete militarization, with a large part of industry dominated not by the needs of peaceful development but by the supposititious needs of future warfare. Finally, he declares that "no nation can be safe in its will to peace so long as any other single powerful nation refuses to settle its grievances at the council table."

This is a new and extraordinary doctrine which, like so many of his other statements, he has plainly not considered in all its ramifications. If it is true, it means that if Russia, for example, or Germany, refuses to disarm there can never be any disarmament. In that case nations are doomed to destruction, for some, as the President has repeatedly pointed out, are now expending more than 50 per cent of their national income on armaments and thereby steadily lowering the living standards of their masses. Mr. Roosevelt fails to appreciate that his armament program takes us in exactly the opposite direction of that which he urges when he declares that our democracy must save itself by raising the standard of living and vastly improving the status of the individual citizen while speeding up the processes of our democratic government.

It is the same old Roosevelt, well-intentioned, patriotic, and wholly confused in his intellectual processes and economic thinking. He cannot resist saying out loud whatever occurs to him. Years ago Charles E. Hughes when Governor of New York declared in his first term that he had already learned one thing, and that was that a man in public life ought not to voice the first thought that came into his mind. He was plainly striking out at another Roosevelt, Theodore, who also was given to just this sort of thing. That Franklin is cleverer than Theodore I do not deny. None the less, there is much resemblance between them, and as a politician Theodore would have approved of the President's political strategy in promising not to be radical on domestic issues and to be good to big business for the remainder of his term, while raising the preparedness smoke screen. His appeal for a united people against encroachments upon our democracy will be heard and followed. His demand that all criticism cease and that there be no longer any differences over his New Deal should and will fall on deaf ears.

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

A LAST CONVERSATION WITH KAREL CAPEK

BY ERIKA MANN

THE death of Karel Capek, the Czech author, is a great sorrow for all who knew his work, his noble and gallant bearing as a public figure, his animation, warm-heartedness, and talented intensity as a private person. The news came as a great surprise, very suddenly, although it was not really surprising. With a consistency that has no parallel for horribleness, the best, the most spiritual persons, the true representatives of every country, disappear from the scene in that country as soon as the fascist dictatorship comes to power. They flee, they are killed, they kill themselves—or they simply die: they let any disease germ penetrate their despairing bodies; an attack of grippe which under other circumstances would scarcely trouble them carries them off. An artist of Capek's rank and convictions could not breathe in a mutilated, fascist Czechoslovakia subject to Hitler's overlordship. And since to him as his nation's greatest poet, who combined high spiritual and literary qualities with genuine and deep-rooted patriotism, to live and work in a foreign language and a foreign land was inconceivable —and since on the other hand it was clear that he could not remain any longer at home—he lay down and died.

I spent a whole day with him immediately after the Munich "peace" pact. I drove out to his house in the country in a small open car placed at my disposal by the Ministry of Propaganda, which was still on a war basis. A soldier sat at the wheel beside me—a young lad in uniform, silent and very pale. His narrow Slav's eyes had an angry and defiant expression. The streets were choked with the retreating columns of the Czech army; silent, hanging their heads, the soldiers evacuated one village, one height, after another, though no enemy was visible. The sight of these strong, splendidly equipped troops drawing back, back, back without a struggle was painful because it seemed completely incomprehensible and unnatural. I speak to the chauffeur about it; he has tears in his narrow eyes as he shows me the fortresses and explains the wire entanglements and the air-raid defenses which had been built so joyfully. "We could have held out for months—alone if necessary," he says; and his face, the face of the deceived and betrayed Czech people, will remain forever in my heart and memory. When he sets me down before the beautiful old manor house which is my destination, he asks for three hours' leave. He would like to drive to his family in the little village of X— not far from here. "We don't know yet whether Hitler will march in there," he says, "and my people are democrats—it would go badly with them."

I have known Karel Capek since the first of many visits in Prague. I know that he is very friendly with Benes, and I hope that he will be able to explain to me why Benes showed such inexplicable trust in powers which had announced clearly enough their treacherous intentions, why he had hoped and waited, as if paralyzed, like a rabbit held by the eye of a snake. Frau Capek, the renowned Czech actress Olga Scheinpflugowa, receives me. She is white as a sheet; one can see that she has been weeping for a long time. She tells me that Capek passed the night weeping and writing to Benes; never in my life have I seen so many men weep as in these days since the Czechoslovak Republic was condemned to death by its friends.

Capek, though his fine Slavic face was marked with melancholy—his dark eyes could be of a boundless sadness —was fundamentally cheerful by nature. He was a clear strong spirit who often found expression in sharp and extremely comic satire. His play "The White Sickness," which was produced with the greatest success throughout Europe, is a magnificently drawn up, aggressive, and tragi-comic indictment and exposure of the fascist dictatorship. The "white sickness" is a mysterious, revolting, and deadly disease which appears as a pestilence wherever fascism comes to power. In the end it brings down the dictator himself at the moment when, the desire and goal of his existence having been achieved, the chaos of the world war finally closes in. "The White Sickness" shows the brilliant, humorous, polished side of the poet. It shows Capek, moreover, as a fighter of quality who was able to wage war on the highest level and from the watch tower of the spirit.

"We have lost it, our battle," he says to me now. "It is all over. Of course I cannot live here any longer—but that is the least of it. I would go gladly if I might do so for good reasons." I answer that there could never be good reasons for him, Capek, to leave the country. "There could only be these abominable, vile, evil reasons." The white sickness, I say to myself, that and only that could drive this man away. "We will emigrate," says Mme Scheinpflugowa. "We will learn to speak and live where freedom still exists." The look which her husband gives her has the shoreless sadness of which I have spoken. Where? that look seems to ask; where, in all the

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world? We speak of America and again it is the wife who is hopeful. "America is great and free," she says, and I add that Capek will be appreciated there. Instead of answering, Capek says, "What will Benes do? He will not be able to remain either." It was two days before the President resigned, but certainly Capek, his friend, already had knowledge of it. I ask my own questions about Benes. "I know, I know," says Capek, putting me off wearily; "he could perhaps have done otherwise, ought perhaps to have done otherwise. But don't you see—his whole life, the collective conception of the Masaryk state, the Benes state, our state, stood and fell with the idea of the Western democracies. If England and France betrayed this idea they betrayed us and delivered us up. So we were lost not only in a military and practical sense but within ourselves, when everything on which we had built crashed."

"But you yourself," I say, attempting a sanguine tone, which miscarries, "surely you will come to us abroad and go on with your work. This horror will have one good consequence for us: the scattered forces of our fighters will receive great and wonderful support from the Czech reinforcements." Again he does not reply directly. "Seek recruits for us across the sea," he says, "I beg you; and when I am no longer here tell the Americans that Czechoslovakia should not be allowed to perish. We must have aid, economic aid at least, to keep alive." "But we are going, aren't we?" asks his wife in an imploring voice. "You do not want to stay here?" Capek shakes his head, but it does not look like a decisive no; this head-shaking is in final despair. "Here I cannot stay—" he says. His voice does not fall, and the sentence has the effect of being unfinished.

Even when I bring the conversation around to his books, to "The Newts" or "Hardudal," he does not cheer up. "Imagine to yourself something on the order of 'Hardudal' if I had to write it in a foreign country," he says. And, indeed, this most poetic and most moving of his books is so truly "Blood and Soil" in the best, in the real, sense of the words that the Nazis must turn pale with envy. "But 'The Newts,'" I say, "is read in many languages. The story of these sly clever creatures which were first trained by man for all sorts of uses and which finally, turning into a mob without soul or morals but with dangerous technical skill, plunge the world into ruin—this story is so contemporary and exciting, so convincing, and in addition so comical and entertaining that it wins friends everywhere." "Perhaps," he says, again with the languid gesture of denial. At the sound of this "perhaps" his wife bursts into tears.

Karel Capek is dead. He could not remain in Czechoslovakia—he said so—but neither would he have been able to live outside. The loss to the world is great. The victims claimed by the "white sickness" have been increased by one more, a heavy and terrible sacrifice.

BOOKS

Notes by the Way

JOHN A. KOUWENHOVEN'S "Adventures of America, 1857-1900" (Harper, $3.50) exercises the same appeal as the current play about Abraham Lincoln. It is a collection of prints from *Harper's Weekly,* with commentary, which recreate more vividly than written history the humor and tragedy of provincial America growing into an industrial nation. Like the family album it induces a pleasant nostalgia for a vanished era and a warm sense of the past. The wood engravings of Thomas Nast—which prove that the static quality so often found in woodcuts of today is not necessarily inherent in the medium—are the most striking pictures in the book. And they remind us, among other things, that although we have come to think of the present as a pictorial age, no contemporary cartoonist has matched Nast's achievement in breaking the hold of the Tweed gang in New York by his great series of cartoons directed to that end.

William Murrell, in his admirable "History of American Graphic Humor" (Macmillan, $7), of which the second volume, covering the period from 1865 to 1938, has recently been published, ascribes the decline in the influence of the political cartoon to the collapse of the widely circulated weeklies in which they appeared and to the fact that every important newspaper in the country now prints at least one cartoon a day, which perforce dies with the day. The law of diminishing returns operates in this field as well as in others, but perhaps another reason for the decline of the cartoon as a decisive political weapon is to be found in the parallel decline of American politics from a struggle between two parties fresh from an actual civil war over real issues to a mere struggle for public office. Nast, the Republican, was himself caught in this decline, as Mr. Murrell's book demonstrates, and the most powerful cartoons of this century have sprung from an opposition far to the left of both the Republican and the Democratic Party. Inevitably their circulation, and therefore their influence, has been limited by the obstinate refusal of the inhabitants of the land of opportunity to accept as real or relevant the struggle between classes, as opposed to the fight between two political parties whose basic assumptions are after all identical. The old *Masses* was propelled into the main stream of American popular thinking by its opposition to the war, and its cartoonists and editors had the distinction of being directly attacked by the government.

Since then many of our best cartoonists have labored in the obscurity to which, so far, the American public has condemned radicalism. Less radical though very accomplished artists such as Edmund Duffy, Rollin Kirby, and D. R. Fitzpatrick fit better into Mr. Murrell's diagnosis: the influence of their work has been diluted by the very ubiquity of cartoons, including their own daily output. The question arises, however, whether a left liberal weekly like *The Nation* which speaks to that fairly wide section of opinion represented by the left wing of the New Deal is not neglecting an important

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weapon. With the record of *Harper's Weekly* before me I am inclined to think so.

Aside from the drawings of Nast, Mr. Kouwenhoven's book contains a great variety of humorous and serious drawings in which the drama of Civil War, Reconstruction, and industrialization fills many pages—along with the fantastic costumes in which our not far distant ancestors performed their historic roles. In a picture of mixed bathing at Newport in the fifties the presumably happy bathers look more like victims caught fully clothed in a flood, and the representation of a lady tourist in the vault of the Sub-Treasury in New York inspecting gold bricks reminds us of the days when gold was gold.

The most charming pictures in the book are some early prints by Winslow Homer. His scenes in Boston Common and Central Park in New York have the quality, to be found in the paintings of Renoir of a quite different background, that reflects the existence of a homogeneous and stable, though limited and provincial, society. Great forces—the Civil War, industrialism, and immigration—broke it up. We shall not have such pictures again until our assimilation of our own extraordinary industrial and technological inventions and of the alien cultures that have reached our shores in continuing waves shall have produced a new homogeneity and stability.

Such books as "Adventures of America" and "A History of American Graphic Humor," aside from their direct appeal, are extremely valuable in this connection. They offer a perspective in which the almost fashionable despair of achieving a distinctive American culture appears, as it actually is, excessive. The task of assimilating our past, near and distant, is a great one. Henry James, in "The American Scene," wrote eloquently of the complexity and scope of the problem, especially in relation to immigration—and quailed before it. Yet its very magnitude, which implies the scale of the reward in its accomplishment, should stimulate rather than discourage the intellectual perennially searching for a function in the real world. Fortunately the past decade has seen a genuine critical movement toward the discovery and understanding of our artistic and social resources—which is essential to any intelligent ordering of our future.

On the first page of the delightful "Oxford Book of Light Verse" ($3), compiled by W. H. Auden, this couplet appears in The Song of Lewes (circa 1264):

> Richard of Alemaigne whil that he was kyng,
> he spende al his tresor upon swyuyng

Shall we now have protests from the learned societies against the swinging of Early English?

One of the most embarrassing things about the dictatorships these days is their invocation of principles and policies, usually contradictory, on which the Western empires have operated. Japan is "civilizing" China for its own good; Mussolini's only motive in invading Ethiopia was to give the natives the advantages of Italian culture. But the item which should make us cringe most is the announcement from Berlin of a "Jim Crow" law for Jews in the Reich.

MARGARET MARSHALL

A Guide to Social Thought

SOCIAL THOUGHT FROM LORE TO SCIENCE. By Harry Elmer Barnes and Howard Becker. With the Assistance of Emile Benoit-Smullyan and Others. D. C. Heath. Two Volumes. $9.50.

THIS is a huge enterprise carried out with courage and ability. The first volume surveys the history of social thought from its beginning with the preliterate peoples who, the authors point out, must have had social thought even if they could not write, up to the latest cyclical theory of Pitirim Sorokin, who, the authors do not point out, insists on writing even when he hasn't much social thought. The second volume, abandoning the chronological for the national, surveys the present trends in sociology from England to Japan, including the Scandinavian countries and including also so piquant a caption as "émigré Ukrainian sociology." Together the volumes form a short encyclopedia of social thought, more likely to be referred to than read—a collective enterprise with a far-flung authorship in addition to the two main authors, over a decade in the writing, and with a literary history so complex that an elaborate key is required to indicate who wrote what.

The authors have leaned upon every reference and research aid, but chiefly they have been influenced by the sociological tradition proper as represented by such men as Albion Small in America and Max Weber and von Wiese in Germany. Considering the scope and magnitude of the work, they have shown an impressive accuracy, competence, and discrimination. They have produced what is easily the best single survey of the history of social thought—a category that comprises probably our dreariest and dullest textbook writing. Not that they have wholly escaped dreariness and the impress of scissors and paste-pot. Often I have got more out of browsing through their voluminous bibliographical footnotes than out of reading their discussions of Adam Smith and Spengler. Despite that, the book has bursts of vigor and a certain sharpness. Its weakness lies in the authors' vagueness as to what constitutes social thought. Sometimes you think they are including the whole realm of what Charles Beard has called "the discussion of human affairs." At other times they are narrowly sociologists, limiting themselves to a "central field" of inquiry.

This stricture is true especially of the second volume, whose chapter on the United States gives a dull recital of sociology instruction in various universities and the "contributions" of a long list of scholars. Why this was done it is difficult to see; no authors would dare say what they really think of their academic colleagues and contemporaries. I could quote howlers such as the one about the Harvard Sociology Department: "The prospects for extensive graduate instruction at Harvard are now good." If Harvard social science today has any prospects, they are certainly not to be found in sociology proper. Another result of the authors' cultivation of a single "central field" is that by pursuing sociology they miss the social sciences. In America, at any rate, the field of sociology has become eroded. The great names—Small, Cooley, Ward—are the names of the past. It is in the marginal fields, such as law, anthropology, psychology, economics,

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that the real creativeness of American social thought must be sought. But the authors do not seek it there.

The chapter on Marxian theory is one of the fairest I have seen in an academic textbook. Nevertheless, the authors find it necessary to point out, perhaps because they know the mentality of sociology teachers, that while Marx's name is important in the history of social thought, "we do not necessarily subscribe either to his theories or his program." There is no similar *caveat* for Burke or Bagehot or Weber or any other theorist. But if socialism has cast its shadow on these pages, fascism has not. Aside from Pareto and Spann there is no discussion of fascist sociology such as may be found in Kolnai's recent splendid book, "The War Against the West." In its fundamental conception the book predates the sharpening of the social struggle in the past decade. Yet it is out of social struggles that social thought develops.

MAX LERNER

A Mixed Bag

NEW WRITING. New Series. Fall, 1938. Edited by John Lehmann. Alfred A. Knopf. $2.75.

THERE is every reason why we should be disposed to examine sympathetically a further instalment of a book whose blurb claims that "it continues to be the most important expression we have of the younger men who are determining the art of the future," but in view of the title sympathy does not exempt from disappointment at failing to find much original inspiration or imaginative power behind this particular sample of modernity. Leaving aside the few characteristic samples of tense war- and graveyard-conscious verse, the bulk of contributions to the book can be divided into critical or social essays and stories designed to make either our flesh or our nerves creep.

Mr. Spender dissects in a critical spirit the poetical dramas of W. H. Auden and Christopher Isherwood; Mr. Robert Herring writes with contagious appreciation of French films; and Mr. Edgell Rickwood discusses André Malraux. The sociological essay, which occupies the most space in the book, is a study of jazz and its protagonists in the cheap dance halls of industrial England, but though the author is finally discovered to be unsympathetic toward this "post-war religion of modern youth" he surveys without bringing any conclusiveness to his survey.

The stories lead off with a page or two of the American scene, and then there is a German item concerning the behavior of men trapped in a mine awaiting rescue, a plight which needs to be done very well at this point if it is to be done again, whereas Miss Seghers indicates tension by the easy device of a lack of coherence. But English writers are chiefly represented: there is a stimulating account by Mr. Willy Goldman of the Jewish novel, with special relation to the London East End Jew, and the East End comes in once more with a short story of some louts who beat up a young Jew walking out with his girl. A beating up also ends the story of two English sailors who, having to ship as kitchen hands, take it out of the unjust steward after drawing their pay. But stark realism has never been the English forte; here one may consider how much more effective is a translation from the French of Louis Guilloux of a stupid hysterical quarrel between a man and a woman which nevertheless, through the mere rendering of detail, encompasses a tender sense of humanity's irrationality. But such a tolerant sense of life is far to seek in this particular specimen of "New Writing," which, if it were representative of literature, would seem to show that we have progressed from the *Comédie humaine* to the *Condition humaine*, and lost in the transition.

NORAH HOULT

Answer to "Mein Kampf"

OUR BATTLE. By Hendrik Willem Van Loon. Simon and Schuster. $1.

"OUR BATTLE" is a lost opportunity, at best a Pyrrhic achievement: one more such defense of democracy and—. The more the pity because of the influence of the author as a liberal teacher. His book is a warning that not even a professional historian with a facile pen can achieve a dignified and effective product overnight. On October 12 Van Loon heard in his Connecticut home that the Mayor of the City of New York was booed, while the name of a "foreign dictator was greeted with tumultuous applause," at a Columbus Day celebration. On October 13 he came to New York to see the expressions of organized resentment by the liberal citizens. Keenly disappointed at finding that the burghers did not take seriously the mistaken loyalty of a group of ardent Latins who made up for their ignorance of American institutions and the English language by excessive and sentimental devotion to things Italian, he returned to Old Greenwich and on October 14 began his answer to "Mein Kampf." On October 21 he completed his book. Within a month his publisher had it on the counter for the American public. After reading "Our Battle," one wonders why Van Loon did not take his son's advice. But fathers never do. The young man read the manuscript very carefully and then with commendable frankness assured his parent that his "warning against Hitler" could have been reduced to a single paragraph that "every housewife would have understood."

"Our Battle" would gain immeasurably if it were written with dignity and concentrated its effort on carrying the reader to an enduring conviction. Every page is given to name-calling until the reader wonders why the author did not follow the more effective technique of the scholar—to present the facts and let them indict the hysterical dictator drunk with power. In his "Force or Reason," Hans Kohn presents a devastating indictment of the totalitarian state, but the indictment is invariably drawn by the reader, never by the author.

In the limited space of his small book Van Loon gives us the family history of both Hitler and Mussolini: Hitler's father had three wives, the Führer being a son of the third; the neglected offspring of the irresponsible father became an itinerant dauber, a postal-card artist, never a house painter or a paper hanger—details as irrelevant as the story of Rousseau's illegitimate progeny or of Franklin's philanderings in France would be in tracing the development of the concept of democracy. The author deems all this small gossip impor-

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tant, but his story of how Mussolini and Hitler actually seized organized governments is surprisingly brief and very hazy.

The most disappointing feature of "Our Battle" is its complete neglect of the great human gains that we may attribute to democracy. It includes a careful and detailed formulation of the great contributions of Fascism in Italy and Nazism in Germany. Pages 44-56 present at least twelve major social gains under totalitarianism as practiced by Il Duce. The list of contributions of Hitlerism, skilfully tabulated on pages 127-131, will strengthen many a critical Nazi follower in his wavering faith.

No honest student will quarrel with this presentation of the achievements of these two systems of totalitarianism. Even the devil must be given his due. But why cheat the angels? We quarrel with the author on at least three counts: for omitting an equally skilful analysis of the human gains attributable to democratic forms of control; for neglecting to present a full analysis of the social cost of the gains in totalitarian states; for failing, so sadly, to show that these and comparable gains have been achieved under democratic systems without the loss of basic human rights and all civil liberties.

The dictators have proved themselves adept at mud-slinging and name-calling when democratic communities have taken issue with totalitarian techniques of social control. Van Loon evidently decided to fight fire with fire, forgetting that fire is employed for the purpose when the use of water is impracticable. As a keen student of social evolution, he should have employed the method that is more native to one of his training and his superb gifts. PAUL KLAPPER

Italy in Colorado

WAIT UNTIL SPRING, BANDINI. By John Fante. Stackpole Sons. $2.50.

JOHN FANTE'S short stories are already known. His first novel tells the story of an Italian-American family in Colorado. The son, an Italian of the second generation in this country, is the chief interpreter of the little drama that takes place between a lusty father and a religious mother.

The characters are real; the style is excellently adapted to the presentation of a simple, untrained mind attempting to articulate and arrange ideas growing out of the contact of the Italian with an alien culture; the whole story is fully imagined and convincing. Actually the plot is very simple, being a quarrel between a husband who suddenly begins to feel important in a new situation and a wife who clings to God until her husband deserts her and then, with precise fury, has her vengeance. But it is not the plot that makes the interest of the book; it is rather the innumerable correct details of life in such a family, together with the quality of the writing. John Fante keeps himself out of the picture, but he is obviously writing about people he knows at first hand. Nothing, for instance, could be more accurate than his description of Bandini's shame when the "widow" who has picked him up puts him out. The characterization of the "widow," incidentally, was clearly the most difficult in the book, yet she is completely convincing.

Mr. Fante's quick images of people and his abrupt but rhythmical sentences bespeak more than the usual skilful novelist. "Wait Until Spring, Bandini," although it has no such powerful theme, reminds one of Silone's "Fontamara" in its use of a pruned yet at times rich prose to convey the speech of a somewhat inarticulate people. Mr. Fante clearly has deep knowledge of a folk. EDA LOU WALTON

The New Palestine

DEEP FURROWS. By Avraham Ben-Shalom. Translated by Frances Burnce. New York: Hashomer Hatzair. $1.35.

THIS little book will find a place in the enduring literature of the new Palestine. For it presents the first comprehensive description in English of the Zionist collectives which have attempted to change the psychology, the economic habits, and the status of the Jews. Because it is written with sincerity, vividness, and quiet humor, and also because the life of these colonies, many of which stand on the dangerous outposts of Jewish settlement, resembles in some respects that of the early American frontiersmen in their stockades, it should be of special interest to American readers.

The wisest and most idealistic of the young Zionists have realized from the beginning that no healthy Jewish life could be built in Palestine by exploiting cheap native labor. They insisted that Jews must do their own work in order to free themselves from the insecurities of the middle-class position which historic necessity had forced upon them. From the attempt to make the Jew a worker flowed the natural desire to create a cooperative rather than an exploiting economy. That this effort met with any success is quite amazing in the light of the middle-class psychology of most Zionists and of the competition in Palestine of vast numbers of impoverished natives ready to work for starvation wages. Only unwavering idealism and the creation of a powerful, disciplined, statesman-like labor movement enabled the Jewish workers to achieve a significant victory. Today the General Federation of Jewish Labor with its collectives and cooperatives, its housing, maritime, and public-works projects, its schools and press, dominates Jewish Palestine as no other labor movement does in any other free country in the world.

Among the strongest elements in the Palestine labor movement is Hashomer Hatzair, the Young Guard. Originally a Scout organization of middle-class Jewish boys in Poland, it became a movement to establish socialist collectives in Palestine. It has formed thirty-five of these collectives, and they are among the most successful enterprises in the land. In terms of his experience in one of them the author describes the various phases of their life, their ideology, their achievements and failures, their economic and political organization, their culture and education, their family life, the status of women, and the rearing of children.

Of greatest interest at the moment is the attitude of this group toward the Arabs. They have insisted that the interests of the Jewish masses and the Arab masses are identical and that the friendship of the latter is more important than British promises. They have even envisioned the possibility of a bi-national socialist Palestine, freed from exploiting effendi, imperialists, and capitalists, participating in a pan-Arab federation.

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> The hundreds and thousands of terrorists who leaned on German rifles or Italian bayonets and spread the net of fascism from Gibraltar to Suez cannot blind us to the hundreds of thousands of starved fellaheen and exploited Arab workers who sooner or later must join us in the struggle for our common welfare. The day will yet come when this alliance will break down the walls of hate and murder erected by Muftis and Arab Effendi as well as the boundaries that have been set up by British imperialism.

Toward this end they have participated in movements to organize Arab peasants and workers, to initiate agrarian reform, and to teach the Arab how to produce more from his barren soil. These efforts, however, have met with little success. For in Palestine as elsewhere nationalism has become the ruling force. If some day class interests should predominate over national, the program of Hashomer Hatzair would hold out the greatest hope for peace.

In the meantime this group, together with all of Labor Palestine, does not give ground. Although they refuse to participate in acts of terrorism, they successfully defend themselves against Arab terrorists. No settlement has been abandoned, no land surrendered. Instead new colonies have been established on the very spots where Jewish workers were murdered, as a kind of blood bond with the soil. This is the only place in the world where Jews under attack are not running away. Under each fresh attack they sink their roots deeper into the land. Even the most fanatical Arab extremists do not hope to drive these Jews from Palestine, but only to prevent further immigration and land purchase. Their success will depend on whether nationalism or socialism will triumph in the modern world. In that struggle an important part will be played by those whose "eyes are fixed on distant horizons, for our feet stand fast in deep furrows."

PHILIP S. BERNSTEIN

DRAMA

More Matter and Less Art

LAST week I remarked in passing that ghosts of one kind or another were taken as a matter of course on the contemporary stage. I might have added that what used to be called the conventional dramatic form is being abandoned with increasing frequency and that half the first nights on Broadway now reveal plays whose techniques even the patrons of little theaters would have regarded as eccentric five years ago. In certain instances the results have abundantly justified the means, but novelty is no longer novel and demands no especial consideration in its own right. Five years ago the least that one could in decency say of an unconventional play was to call it "an interesting experiment"; today there is no reason why one should not translate the phrase into what is actually an equivalent and say only that the author "means well."

I cannot find it in my heart to say much more in favor of the first of this week's "experiments," which is called "Everywhere I Roam" (National Theater). Here we have a sort of

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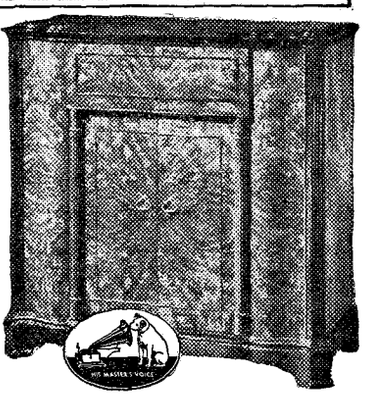

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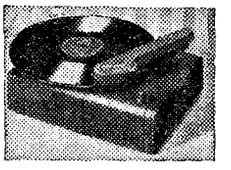

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Child's History of America in picture, story, and song, in the course of which legend is mingled with allegory and Johnny Appleseed frustrated by two sinister figures in top hats representing Finance. Others have already complained that it is hardly fair to set a sort of Currier and Ives picture of the age of innocence over against a singularly unattractive cartoon of the machine age, and the complaint is justified. Even more serious, however, is the fact that the highly stylized presentation achieves no real style and does little to charm one into the acceptance of its naivetes. Marc Connelly is set down as coauthor with Arnold Sundgaard, and it doubtless seemed to Mr. Connelly that the technique of the "Living Newspaper" might be combined with that of his own "Green Pastures" to make something twice as effective as either, but for a fairly obvious reason it does not work out that way. The non-realistic portions of the "Living Newspaper" were acceptable because the allegory served as a sort of highly intellectualized shorthand. "Green Pastures," on the other hand, was acceptable because it succeeded in creating a certain mythological atmosphere in which everything occurred in accordance with the logic of a recognizable folk imagination. But the allegory and the symbolism of "Everywhere I Roam" seem dictated by no consistent controlling principle, and the mingling of intellectual shorthand with vaguely mythological elements is made not less but more confusing by the fact that there are purely external similarities between personages proper to the one and personages proper to the other. Since no real style is achieved, such a scene as that in which the sinister financiers uproot an apple orchard one foot high is neither quaint on the one hand nor abstract on the other. It is merely very close to being downright silly. Some of the dancing is good.

Thornton Wilder's "The Merchant of Yonkers," for which Herman Shumlin has leased the Guild Theater, is by no means so ambitious or technically so unusual as the same author's "Our Town," but it does come under the head of "novelties," and it suffers like "Everywhere I Roam" from a failure to achieve satisfactorily the stylized manner toward which it is obviously aspiring. According to a program note the play is "based upon a comedy by Johann Nestroy (Vienna, 1842), which was itself based upon an English original." With neither of these originals am I familiar, but it is obvious that the ultimate substratum consists of a farce, soundly constructed upon familiar old-fashioned lines, in which young lovers frustrate Old Money-Bags and everybody has frequent opportunity to hide in closets, behind screens, and under tables. The idea seems to be to play Mr. Wilder's version of this old play as a period piece, to encourage the actors to use all the old low-comedy tricks, and to emphasize the artificialities in order to heighten the generally larkish atmosphere of the occasion. Presumably Mr. Wilder is responsible for the soliloquies setting forth neatly a whimsically epicurean commentary, and these are pleasant in their own way; but so far as I could make out, most of the amusement which the play furnishes (and it is often quite laughable) is the result of the honest farce of the original author, to which neither the rewriting nor the stylized production contributes very much. On the other hand, a good deal *is* contributed by the very effective performances of Jane Cowl and June Walker.

"Mamba's Daughters" (Empire Theater) is DuBose Heyward's novel of the same name made into a starring vehicle for Ethel Waters. Miss Waters gives an impressive and full-bodied impersonation, and the singing—there is one song composed for the occasion by Jerome Kern, and a number of traditional tunes—is uniformly magnificent. So, for that matter, are the local color and the atmosphere, but unfortunately the story is neither very powerfully imagined nor very dramatically told. The action is obviously suspended from time to time in order to make a place for such scenes as that of the "love feast," and in itself is little more than a series of conventional tear-jerking situations. Such material deserves a better framework.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Next Week in *The Nation*
THE UNITED STATES AT LIMA
By HUBERT HERRING

RECORDS

"I WANT A LITTLE GIRL," which I mentioned recently as an outstanding jazz record, is one of several that the Kansas City Six—a group from Count Basie's Orchestra—made for Commodore. It is also the best; but the briefer solos that Buck Clayton and Lester Young contribute to "Pagin' the Devil" are very fine; and Clayton does beautiful things throughout "Good Mornin' Blues." Some of the big words that are slung around pretentiously for effect rather than for meaning, in this field, have been applied to Lester

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Young: "warmth and simplicity that probably have not been approached since the days of Teschmaker"; but a man who actually heard Teschmaker at close range for a long period tells me the style and feeling of his playing were completely different from Young's.

On Billie Holiday's record of "I Can't Get Started" and "The Very Thought of You" (Vocalion) are instrumental interludes by superb players who should have been named. Then there is a re-pressing of the Mound City Blue-Blowers' "One Hour" (Bluebird), with a tenor-saxophone solo by the distinguished Coleman Hawkins. And moderately good are Mildred Bailey's "My Melancholy Baby" (Vocalion) and Cootie Williams's "Swing Pan Alley" and "Chasing Chippies" (Vocalion).

As for Benny Goodman's "Swing Session" (Victor: four records, $3.50), "Make Believe" offers extensive solo work on muted trumpet, presumably by Harry James, whose playing is usually coarse, but who plays here with delicacy and sensitiveness in a style that is delightful—though I must add that his invention is not unfailing, and that some of the phrases which begin with such clear direction end in aimless profusion of notes. And Goodman himself has an exquisite solo in "Sweet Sue—Just You." But the rest is dull; and Goodman's solo in "The Blue Room," from the first note of his entrance to the last flourish of his exit, is the straining exhibitionism of the spotlighted band-leader playing with clarinet tilted toward the ceiling—horrible in itself, and disastrous to the delicate quality of the Rodgers song. Nor is this the only record in which Goodman's playing shows the effect of his recent activity, in a straining for effectiveness that he does not achieve: even in "Bumble Bee Stomp," which is fairly good, his own work is poor.

The guitar-playing of Vicente Gomez is a miracle of technical mastery and musical subtlety which can be experienced in the little album (three records, $2.75) issued by Decca. The pieces are by Gomez himself; and the best are "La Farucca" and "Sevillanas y Panaderos" on record 23068.

Sampling the 50- and 75-cent Decca records further I have encountered some that are very good: additional Handel Concerti Grossi played by the Boyd Neel Orchestra; Vera Schwarz's singing of an aria from Mozart's "Idomeneo"; the Ambrosian chants recorded by singers of the Ambrosian School of Sacred Music in Milan; Schumann's "An den Sonnenschein" and "Marienwürmchen" delightfully sung by Lotte Lehmann, the first with orchestral accompaniment, the second with piano. Emmy Bettendorf's singing of Brahms's "O wüsst' ich doch den Weg zurück" and "Immer leiser wird mein Schlummer" is excellent, the violin and piano accompaniments highly objectionable (imagine the effect of a treacly violin obligato in a treacly Brahms song); on the other hand the old orchestral accompaniment does not spoil my pleasure from Maria Ivogün's singing—in German—of "Ah! fors' è lui" and "Sempre libera" from "La Traviata." As for the Queen of the Night's aria from "The Magic Flute," Lily Pons sings it as she sings the Queen of Shemakha's aria from "Le Coq d'Or."

I have been informed that certain models of the Ansley Dynaphone use a German motor. The Ansley Company admits this, claiming that it cannot avoid using the motor in these models.

B. H. HAGGIN

THE *Nation* announces a series of articles of great significance to Americans by

Eliot Janeway

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A summary of how radically the world has changed since the Pact of Munich, and what part the United States must play in a new economic situation.

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Letters to the Editors

Facts Are the Answer

Dear Sirs: The leading article in your issue of December 17 has again given eloquent proof that your publication stands in the vanguard of liberal American journalism. The Reverend W. C. Kernan's factual analysis of Coughlin's controversy with the Jews of this country is a masterpiece of research, fact-finding, and logic.

I wish some means could be found to give even wider publicity to the Kernan article. This is a dire need at this time in view of the campaign being conducted not only by Coughlin but also by such Catholic newspapers as the Brooklyn *Tablet,* by the International Truth Society, and by various so-called "Christian Front" organizations. Libels against the Jewish people are being circulated with great force and vigor and must be answered not by name-calling but by undisputed facts and data.

ELIHU L. PLATOWSKY

Brooklyn, December 30

Refugee Theater

Dear Sirs: Actors, directors, writers, and musicians now in exile from Austria have formed the Refugee Artist Group, which plans to open soon in New York a theater similar to the former Kleinkünstlerbühne in Vienna.

Rehearsals are about to start for the first production, with Arthur Lessack of Labor Stage as voice director. The project offers one of the very few possibilities of reestablishing refugees in their own profession. Among the sponsors are Albert Einstein, Edward G. Robinson, John Haynes Holmes, George S. Kaufman, Maurice Evans, and others.

THEO LOWE

New York, January 3

Wilson and Hemingway

Dear Sirs: As a more or less regular reader of *The Nation* I wish to protest against Edmund Wilson's review of Ernest Hemingway's new books in the issue of December 10, especially against that part in which he characterizes Hemingway as unaffected by the "butchery by Communists of the Fascists."

In my opinion, it ill becomes Mr. Wilson to criticize Ernest Hemingway, a writer who has *acted* on his beliefs; and it ill becomes *The Nation* to print statements such as this which only serve to confuse the minds of liberal thinkers at a time when Spain needs the wholehearted and unqualified support of every decent, democracy-loving person in this country. Why Mr. Hemingway, who has risked his life behind the scenes of Loyalist Spain and therefore is in a position to evaluate properly the splendid work Communists have done in organizing the Spanish people to fight fascism, should even dream of criticizing them for doing *our* work, fighting *our* battles, is more than I can understand.

MRS. EDWARD G. CLARK, JR.

New York, December 20

Louis Freeland Post

Dear Sirs: I am writing a biography of Louis Freeland Post, single taxer, editor of the *Public* in Chicago, and Assistant Secretary of Labor in the Wilson Administration. Should any of your readers possess material relating to Mr. Post I would appreciate their communicating with me, at 5211 Second Boulevard, Detroit. STUART PORTNER

Detroit, January 4

The Teachers' Union vs. Professor Childs

Dear Sirs: The New York Teachers' Union regrets that Professor Childs mistook an article in *The Nation* entitled Twilight at Teachers College, regardless of its merits, for a statement of the union's position and made that article the basis for an attack on the New York locals of the American Federation of Teachers.

Professor Childs's statement charging "Stalinist domination" of the New York locals seems to us to do an injustice both to Professor Childs and to the New York locals. The charge is unworthy of an educator who has made Professor Childs's contribution to the amelioration of conditions among Teachers College cafeteria workers, and is unfortunate considering that unfounded charges of Communist domination necessarily today have anti-union and anti-liberal consequences.

Professor Childs's charge is unfair to the New York locals because it is untrue. The New York locals are democratically organized and not controlled by any group.

The New York College Teachers' Union has objected to the undemocratic procedure adopted in the closing of New College. But it has too much confidence in the liberal members of the Teachers College faculty to believe in the Twilight of Teachers College.

EXECUTIVE BOARD, New York College Teachers' Union
EDWIN BERRY BURGUM, President
ARNOLD SHUKOTOFF, Secretary

New York, January 3

Dear Sirs: Confronted by incontrovertible evidence, Local 537 of the American Federation of Teachers by indirection withdraws the charge of the officers of the Joint Board "that Professor Childs's interest in the labor movement ceases when educational problems on his own campus are concerned." Why was this false statement ever published?

The union complains that my charge of left-wing sectarianism is "unfounded." This notwithstanding that:

1. I attended regularly the meetings of the Delegate Assembly of Local 5 for one year. These meetings were often marked by bitter sectarian disputes.

2. Dr. Counts, Dr. Hacker, and I have described the methods of these factions at Columbia University.

3. I was invited to attend a meeting of the "Communist fraction" in Teachers College so that "I could see how constructive its activities were."

4. Dr. Langford publicly admits I was asked to discuss union problems with Mr. Earl Browder and Mr. Clarence Hathaway.

This problem of sectarianism must be faced fundamentally. I hope this controversy will help break the pernicious notion that all public criticism of Communists by liberals should be suppressed. Democracy will suffer if we fail to criticize where criticism is required. Public criticism of the tactics of Communists at Teachers College was long overdue.

JOHN L. CHILDS

New York, January 6

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